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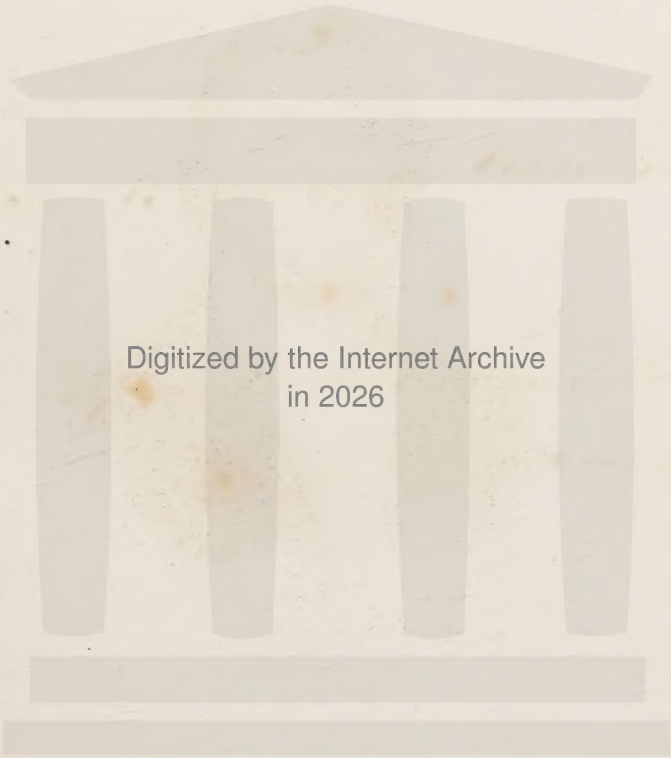
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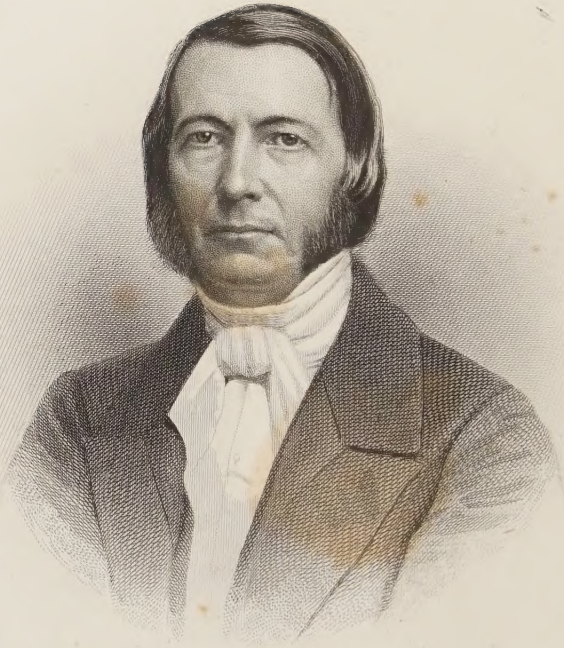

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San Francisco Theological Seminary

THE

COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SAN ANSELMO, MARIN CO. CALIF.

OF

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

1. These collected writings of James Henley Thornwell will probably fill six volumes, of which four will contain all his Theological works, and be published by the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The remaining two will consist of very valuable *miscellanea*, but it is not yet determined under whose auspices as publishers they shall be given to the public. Some of these are metaphysical and some few political; the major portion are sermons and sketches of sermons, addresses, etc., etc.

Of the four volumes to be issued by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication at Richmond, the First may properly be entitled Theological; the Second, Theological and Ethical; the Third, Theological and Controversial; the Fourth, Ecclesiological.

The present volume contains sixteen Lectures in Theology, never before printed, besides three separate articles published during the author's lifetime. All these constitute his discussion of that portion of Theology which relates to God and to Moral Government essentially considered, or to the same as modified by the Covenant of Works. To this volume, by way of appendix, are added his Inaugural Discourse, his Questions on the Lectures to his classes, his Analysis of Calvin's Institutes and his Examination Questions thereupon.

The next volume will discuss that portion of Theology which relates to Moral Government as modified by the Covenant of Grace. These two volumes are not a treatise

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on Theology written by our distinguished professor, but consist of all that he left behind him upon those topics, gathered together since his decease by the hand of friendship, and systematized as well as possible according to his conception of the science of Theology. The sixteen Lectures may be reckoned his very latest productions. Upon some of the topics in the second volume, what we have to present the reader will be some of his earlier writings; there is not one of them, however, but bears the same impress of genius—not one of them but is instinct with the same unction of the Spirit of truth and love.

Accompanying what the second volume will contain upon the Doctrines of Grace, there will be found a partial discussion of the Morals which necessarily flow out of those doctrines. Dr. Thornwell did not write on the other two departments of Ethics—Justice and Benevolence—but he wrote and published a separate volume of seven Discourses on Truth. The place assigned to them in this collection of all his writings is judged to be logically the most suitable one.

The third volume will contain an elaborate discussion of the Canon, the Authority of Scripture, Papal Infallibility, the Mass, the Validity of Popish Baptism, and the Claims of the Romish Church to be reckoned any Church at all. In the discussion of Popish Baptism the author was led into a thorough consideration of the Christian doctrine of Justification, and hence that whole argument might well have been placed in the second volume. Connected as it was, however, by other ties with the Romish controversy, it was judged best, after mature reflection, to place it in the volume of the Theological and Polemic writings.

The discussion of the Canon and of Papal Infallibility appeared first in the newspapers, where Dr. Thornwell was forced to defend himself against Bishop Lynch. His assailant having quit the field, he prosecuted the discussion for a time, and then published both sides of the controversy in a volume which is now out of print. These questions have

been made to assume in our time a fresh interest, and we shall hasten to present to the public Dr. Thornwell's very masterly and learned contributions to their elucidation.

In the fourth volume will be gathered whatever else Dr. Thornwell has left behind him touching the question of the Church.

2. The editor is responsible for the correction of numerous clerical errors in the manuscript lectures and typographical ones in the printed pieces; for the arrangement and classification of the matter; for the Table of Contents; for the Index; and for the side-headings of the Theological Lectures, excepting those belonging to Lecture I., which are Dr. Thornwell's. These side-headings were undertaken in order to make the remaining lectures correspond in that particular with the first one. It is hoped they may sometimes assist beginners in Theology somewhat better to comprehend the abstruser parts of these Lectures.

3. In the preparation of these volumes the editor has been indebted for counsel and encouragement to his three colleagues, Drs. Howe, Plumer and Woodrow, to Dr. Palmer of New Orleans, and to Stuart Robinson. For important assistance rendered his thanks are due to Dr. T. Dwight Witherspoon of Memphis. To Dr. J. L. Girardeau of Charleston he is under special obligations for the large drafts which he has kindly allowed to be made continually upon his learning, judgment and taste, and for a vast amount of actual labour by which he has assisted to prepare these writings for the press. Dr. Thornwell's friend, loving and beloved, as well as the editor's, this has been with him of course a labour of love; yet it is proper here to record this public acknowledgment of the toil he has without stint bestowed upon these works. There are two other persons without whose aid this task could never have been performed. They may not be named here; but the author, whilst he was with us, was their revered and beloved friend, and the severest and most protracted literary drudgery for his sake has been joyfully performed by them. Faith-

fully have they wrought in erecting this monument to our illustrious dead.

There is still a debt of obligation to be acknowledged. Soon after the war, informal arrangements with the Messrs. Carter of New York were entered into for the publication of these works. It was then expected to collect from the friends of Dr. Thornwell the means of stereotyping them, and to present the plates to his widow. Mr. Robert Carter claimed that he was one of this class, and as a contribution generously gave his beautiful plates of *Thornwell on Truth.* When it was finally concluded, however, to adopt the octavo form for these collected writings, those plates, being in duodecimo, were returned to their liberal donor, and a new edition has since appeared, upon which the customary royalty is paid to Mrs. Thornwell. Matters stood thus when Dr. Baird of the Richmond Committee expressed a strong desire for our Church to own and publish herself the works of her beloved son, and the idea commended itself so strongly to the editor's feelings and judgment that he frankly solicited of the New York publishers a release from his engagements to them. It was unhesitatingly and very politely granted. Very recently the same gentlemen were asked to allow the Discourses on Truth to make part of this collection. The answer was in these short and pithy terms: "Your letter was received this morning, and we accede at once and cordially to your request." Not many words are needed to express a deep sense of so much kindness so kindly done.

It is proper to say that while the stereotype plates of this collection will belong to our Church, the family of the deceased will receive from the Committee, who bear all the expenses of printing, binding, etc., a very liberal royalty on all sales *in perpetuo.*

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Pantheism aggravates instead of diminishing the objection to Creation from the existence of evil by lodging it in God's very nature.

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These views of moral government and the relation of a servant are scriptural. Exposition of Romans ii. 6–11, and of Ezekiel xxxiii. 12, *seq.*

Moral government to be carefully distinguished from moral discipline. The law knows no discipline but growth. Discipline provides for the formation of holy habits and the eradication of propensities to evil. The law knows how to punish, but not to reform. It knows no repentance; once a sinner, always and hopelessly a sinner. Four distinctions between government and discipline specified. In fine, Discipline is of Grace—Government, of Nature..... *Page* 252

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THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

The way is now open to examine the peculiar features of the dispensation under which man was placed immediately after his creation. The servant was to become a son, and so there was grace in the first covenant as truly as in the second. Although the adoption was of grace, yet it must also be a reward of obedience, for man was not to be arbitrarily promoted. An important modification of the general principles of moral

government is introduced by which probation is limited as to time. This brings into the Divine economy a new feature, viz.—justification. These are free acts of God's bounty, and accordingly are matters of pure revelation, as the religion of man must always be. The dispensation under which these modifications of moral government are introduced is called the Covenant of Works.

This covenant defined, and the precise sense given in which the term *covenant* is applied to this dispensation. The two essential things of the covenant.

Prior to the discussion of these, another modification of moral government is considered, by which the probation is limited as to the persons interested, and Adam becomes the representative of all his race. This is a provision of pure goodness. Adam, the root, because to be the head. Representation of grace. Imputation proceeds from the federal tie and not from the natural.

Thus two principles have entered which pervade every dispensation of religion to our race—the principles of justification and imputation—keynotes both of the legal and evangelical covenants.

I. The first essential of the Covenant of Works is its *condition*. This was obedience to a positive precept. Bishop Butler on the difference betwixt moral and positive precepts criticised. The real difference stated. Butler criticised again on the ground of preference of the moral to the positive. Peculiar fitness of the positive to be the condition of the Covenant of Works. Why the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was called by that name. The explanation overturns various hypotheses—as that the effects of the fruit of the two trees were physical effects, and that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a sacrament.

The positive, however, cannot supersede the moral law nor repeal it, for that law was written upon the heart of man. The positive was added to the moral, and Adam was placed under a twofold law. Through the positive the issue to be tried might be determined more speedily and more fully; yet it was the whole twofold law, both moral and positive, under which man was placed. This view confirmed by Scripture. Moreover, the sanction of the positive must have been wholly unintelligible, unless the moral law had established the conviction of good and ill desert. The importance of this whole discussion set forth.

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LECTURE XIII.

ORIGINAL SIN.

The phrase *Original Sin* as used in a wide sense by the Westminster Assembly, in a narrower one by Calvin, Turrettin and nearly all the Reformed. The author of the expression was Augustin, who had three uses for it. In this lecture it is employed in the narrower sense, yet the notion of guilt is not excluded. For the question how guilt can precede existence must be met. It is remitted, however, until the second part of the discussion.

I. How all the early confessions, Lutheran and Reformed, held Original Sin: 1. As being the very mould of man's nature. 2. As negative, the destitution of all holy principles; and as positive, an active tendency to all evil. These but two sides of one and the same thing. 3. As universal and all-pervading. But they distinguished between loss of faculties and extinction of spiritual life. Man retained reason, conscience and taste. Yet these faculties, though not destroyed, were all weakened. Augustin's language on this point was objectionable. The phrase *total depravity* used in two senses, and might be used in a third; but it never was employed to signify that men are as wicked as they could be. 4. As hereditary.

The doctrine as thus stated, if true, is appalling; if not true, it ought to be easily disproved, for the facts of the case are patent, and the reasoning short and simple.

The doctrine must be true, but as it may be exaggerated, it should be examined with the utmost candour and solemnity.

In investigating the facts upon which it is grounded, the *first* fact encountered is, that of the universality of sin. Every human being has often done wrong. The *second* is, that in all there is a stronger tendency to evil than to good. The *third* is, that the best of men complain of its indwelling power. The *fourth* is, that it makes its appearance in the youngest children. These extraordinary facts can be explained only upon the doctrine of Original Sin.

But a tendency to sin may be admitted without confessing the total depravity taught by the Reformers, and the question arises: Is there no middle ground between Pelagians and the Reformed? The Sensationalists have their theory and the Semi-Pelagians theirs, which maintain a natural ability quite different from that of the Arminians. We must consider, therefore, if there be really anything good in man.

If there be, he must both perceive the excellence of God and desire to commune with Him, for both these elements belong to holiness. But Scripture denies to man both of these, and the experience of all the re-

newed confirms the Scripture. The case of unrenewed men of high probity does not at all contradict this testimony; eminent conscientiousness may be conjoined with eminent ungodliness. The virtue of the Stoics was pride; that of Christianity is humility. Holiness and morality differ as the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems. As the one puts the earth in the centre, the other the sun, so the one makes man supreme, the other God.

A passage of Müller on Sin is criticised at length, and four distinctions pointed out between holiness and morality. In what sense man is capable of redemption. The real tendencies of human nature are exhibited amongst the heathen. The summing up shows that man is totally destitute of holiness and dead in trespasses and sins.

II. The question of hereditary guilt now recurs. There are two questions: *First*, how sin is propagated; *Second*, how that which is inherited can be sin. The various theories of Stapfer, Pictet, Turrettin and Edwards are considered, and the whole difficulty is found to lie in what to these divines presents no difficulty: viz.—in the imputation of guilt. Respecting this second question, the difficulty is stated in its fullness. Then, by way of approaching a solution, the question is first considered, whether hereditary depravity can really be sin. The views of Papists and Remonstrants, as represented by Bellarmin and Limborch, pass under review; also those of Zwingle, and then of the other Reformed divines. Then the testimony of Scripture is taken, and arguments from Scripture definitions of sin, and from the relation of inward principle to outward action, and from death being the penalty of original sin, are combined to prove that the depravity in which we are born constitutes us really guilty before God. Then the testimony of our conscience concludes the argument.

Touching the way in which we receive this corruption only two suppositions are possible: One, that the sinful act which produced it was our own act; the other, that it was the act of another.

The question of ante-mundane probation is introduced, and Pythagoras, Plato, Origen, Kant, Schelling, Müller are quoted as holding that theory. Two insuperable objections are brought against it, and then it is also shown to be totally inconsistent with Scripture. It is then considered whether our relation to Adam may not furnish a ground for imputation. Adam was our natural head, and he was also our federal head, and the only point to be examined is whether this latter is founded in justice. An affirmative conclusion has been reached on two different grounds: 1, that of generic unity; 2, that of a Divine constitution.

1. If there was a fundamental unity between Adam and his race, it is clear that he could justly be dealt with as their federal head. He was the race, and could be treated as the race without any fiction of law. Here we see the precise relation betwixt the federal and the natural unity—the former presupposes the latter. Imputation harmonizes the testimony of conscience. According to the Scriptures it is *immediate* and not *mediate*, as one class of theologians have taught. Two other statements of the case are considered, and the conclusion is reached that a generic unity between

Adam and his sons is the true basis of the representative economy in the Covenant of Works.

2. The second theory of an arbitrary Divine constitution is summarily dismissed.

How the individual is evolved from the genus which contains it is acknowledged to be a mystery.

The theory of representation alone consists with Scripture and with conscience..... *Page* 301

LECTURE XIV.

THE STATE AND NATURE OF SIN.

Theological importance of the doctrine of the Fall. We can know neither ourselves, nor God, nor the Redeemer, without appreciating the moral features of our present ruin.

I. The first question is, What is Sin? And our *first* determinations of it must be objective ones. 1. It is the transgression of the moral law, and this law is concerned not only with action, but also with the will and with the dispositions which lie back of it; with the heart as well as with the life. 2. It is disobedience to God. 3. It is the contradiction of God's holiness.

Our *second* determinations of sin are subjective. Man's relation to God as the expression of His will and the product of His power is the true ethical ground of right and wrong. The specific shape which obedience must take is supreme devotion and undeviating conformity. This supreme devotion is expressed in Love, yet love does not, as Müller supposes, exhaust the whole of duty towards God. It is the motive, but not the whole object-matter of obedience. Toward the creature Love is also to be grounded on the common relation to the Creator. Sin, therefore—1, involves a denial of dependence on God. 2. The next step is positive estrangement from God. 3. Then it resolves itself, thirdly, into self-affirmation. The whole subjective determination of Sin, therefore, may be stated as self-affirmation.

An objection may be made to this analysis from certain affections in man which seem to evince disinterested love. And here divines of New England have erred, who put self-love for the subjective determination of sin, and hold to a reflex operation of the mind in the case of all those affections. But the true explanation is that those elementary principles are a part of our nature itself, and that they exist back of the will.

It is to be noticed that both the objective and the subjective determinations of Sin coincide and harmonize in Selfishness, which is the root of our disturbed moral life.

II. But there remains the question, What is the formal nature of Sin? 1. Some have sought to ground moral distinctions in the Will of God, but this is itself grounded in His Nature, which is their true ground. Thus, they are eternal and immutable, and they make us to be like or unlike

God. 2. Some ground them in the tendency to make ourselves or others happy, but this is to ground them in the creature. If grounded in any tendency at all, it should be in the tendency to promote God's glory. But we can neither know our own good, nor the good of others, nor the glory of God, until we know what Good itself is. And the question recurs, What is the Right? To this question the answer is, that the Right is an original intuition which conscience apprehends, as consciousness the external world and ourselves. Conscience does not make, but declares it. The right is a reality, but under manifold forms, as truth, justice, benevolence, temperance; and the common relation of all these to conscience is grounded in their common relation to the holiness of God. 3. The third step is to investigate the nature of Holiness. It differs from the right as a faculty from its object. It is a subjective condition. It is not a single attribute, but is an attribute of all God's attributes, and is the fullness and unity of His nature. In man holiness is not a detached habit, but a nature, and the Scriptures illustrate it by life. It is supreme devotion to God as the supreme good. It is the notion of the right carried up to the notion of the good, and the heart must respond to the conscience in choosing it. The right and the good are objectively the same, and the same subjectively in all holy things; but not in sinners, for man has lost the perception of the good. 4. The fourth step is to consider the nature of Sin from the same qualitative point of view. It is the not-right. The distinction of privation and simple negation considered. The Augustinian doctrine of sin as privation. Peter Lombard quoted. The motive of the doctrine with Augustin was to vindicate God from the authorship of Sin. Van Mastricht, De Moor and Burmann quoted. The Master of the Sentences quoted again. The distinction by later theologians of Sin in the concrete and in the abstract. An expression of Augustin explained. The Vitringas and Wesselius referred to as refuting and defending this theory. Objections to the theory: (1) founded on a double confusion; (2) fails of the purpose for which it was invented; (3) contradicts consciousness and requires an extravagant and shameful distinction; (4) destroys all real significance in the creature, and abolishes the distinction between the efficient and the permissive decrees. On these grounds the theory must be rejected. Moral distinctions not exclusively subjective. There is a principle of unity in the life of sin as there is in the life of holiness. It is opposition to God; it repudiates His authority, and it commits treason against His sovereignty.

This qualitative consideration of good and evil conducts to the same results in relation to the nature of Sin reached by estimating its objective and subjective aspects regarding the law; and the formal principle of Sin is seen to be enmity against God.

III. It has been assumed throughout this discussion that only a rational being can sin, but the precise conditions of responsibility remain to be stated. Holiness demands the living unity of all our higher faculties, and sin is the perversion of them all. In particular, there is no moral worth

in acts where the consent of the heart and will is not found. But the acts and the habits which are beyond the control of a sinner's will, are they by his inability stripped of their sinfulness? A distinction must be made here between inability original and inability penal. What the advocates of what is called *natural ability* really mean by this term. Man's inability is the result of his own choice, and is therefore penal. He is competent only for Sin, but is held responsible for the nature God gave to him; and the law of God must ever be the standard of his life. To apostate creatures actual ability, therefore, can never be the measure of obligation. Two appalling facts of every sinner's consciousness..... *Page* 352

LECTURE XV.

THE POLLUTION AND GUILT OF SIN.

Two inseparable properties or effects of sin—pollution and guilt.

1. The notion of the *macula* or stain of sin exhibits the connection of the beautiful and the good, the deformed and the sinful. Ground of the connection ethical and not æsthetic. Sin is the real and original *ugly*, and its power to make us disgusting is its polluting power. As the vile and mean it makes ashamed. Our sensibility to the estimation in which others hold us is a clear instance of a moral administration carried on in this life, and the full elucidation of the filthiness of sin demands that it be explained. Public opinion abashes us only when it accords with our inward sentiments, and was designed to have force only as representing the judgment of truth. But our own moral nature is never alive to the full shame of sin so long as we can fancy it concealed. At the judgment sin is to be exposed, and a perpetual source of torture for ever to the wicked will be the everlasting contempt to which they shall awake.

2. Guilt divided into *potential* and *actual;* the one is intrinsic ill desert, the other condemnation. Popularly it is taken in the former, theologically in the latter sense. The sense of guilt or remorse contains two ingredients—the conviction that sin ought to be punished, and the conviction that it will be punished. The second conviction involves the other element of guilt—that is, actual condemnation; for guilt in the conscience is a present sentence of death by God. The punishment of sin is no less necessary than certain. The object of penal justice is not the reformation of the offender, but the vindication of law. Scruples about capital punishment always a sign of moral degeneracy. This account of the sense of guilt involves two propositions—*first*, one sin entails on us a hopeless bondage to sin; *second*, one sin involves endless punishment. The sense of guilt intolerable now, but two circumstances in the future will add inconceivably to its terrors—*first*, it will operate more intensely; *second*, it will for ever reproduce the past at every moment. This illustrated in dreams and the experience of persons drowning. Nothing ever forgotten. How shall the lost tolerate for ever their own memory?

The Scriptures sustain these theological determinations of guilt. With

out this distinction of the stain and the guilt of sin, we could not understand Imputation, nor the difference between Justification and Sanctification. This distinction pervades Scripture and lies at the foundation of the whole scheme of Redemption. A distinction of guilt by Papists approved, but their use of it condemned..... .....*Page* 400

LECTURE XVI.

DEGREES OF GUILT.

Stoical paradox. Testimony of Scripture. Jovinian and Pelagius. Doctrine of the Reformers and of the Westminster Assembly. Two grounds of distinction amongst sins: the first is in the object-matter of the law; the second in the subjective condition of the agent. Yet some sins of ignorance reveal greater malignity than some sins against knowledge. The erring conscience necessitates sin whether resisted or obeyed, and the only remedy is spiritual light. A precise scale of iniquity, like that of the Romish confessional, preposterous and delusive. Sins classified as—1, of presumption; 2, of ignorance; 3, of weakness—but all malignant and deadly. The Papal distinction of *venial* and *mortal* sins. Protestants hold that no sin is venial in its own nature, yet all, save one, may be cancelled by the blood of Christ. To a very partial extent a modified sense of the Papal distinction has been adopted amongst Protestants. The unpardonable sin is not final impenitency; nor insult to the Person of the Spirit; nor peculiar to the times of the miraculous effusion; but is sin against the Spirit in His official character.....*Page* 425

THEOLOGY, ITS PROPER METHOD AND CENTRAL PRINCIPLE.

A REVIEW OF BRECKINRIDGE'S OBJECTIVE THEOLOGY.

Thought and action neither contradictories nor opposites, and the great debater was not unlikely to prove a great teacher of Theology.

The argument from final causes for the being of a God as presented in modern systems of Theology not only inconclusive, but pernicious. It makes Deity but a link in the chain of finite causes, and degrades the Creator to the huge Mechanic of the world. Dr. Breckinridge gives to final causes their true place, which is to set forth the nature and the perfections of God;—given a Creator, we can deduce from them that He is intelligent and spiritual.

The conception of this book is the grandeur and glory of Theology considered simply as an object of speculation, which leads the author to separate the consideration of the Truth from the consideration of its effects, and also from the consideration of errors. And it is in this form an original conception. The clue to his plan is the method of the Spirit in the production of faith.

Following Foster in part, Dr. Breckinridge argues illogically against Atheism.

He concentrates his energies upon the third book, which treats of the Nature and Attributes of God. The central ideas of his division of these are three: viz.—Being, Personal Spirit and Absolute Perfection. And he makes five classes of Attributes, calling them Primary, Essential, Natural, Moral and Consummate. This division and the nomenclature criticised.

In relation to the great problem of modern philosophy concerning the Infinite and Absolute, this work takes very definite ground, and that ground the safe and true middle, that we know the existence of the Infinite as truly as of the finite, but cannot comprehend it. The views of Cousin, Hamilton and Kant compared. Dr. Breckinridge's views quoted and strongly commended.

Beginning with a survey of man in his individual and social relations, and demonstrating his universal and irremediable ruin, this treatise proceeds in a second book to consider the Mediator in His Person, Offices and Work; and as in Christ only we know God, the Divine character, perfections and glory are the culminating points in Book Third. In another book the sources of our knowledge of God are consecutively considered, and then the fifth and last book brings us back to Man in his ruin and misery. Primeval Innocence, the Covenant of Works, the Entrance of Sin, the Fall, Election and Redemption, are all now discussed in sixty pages, the rigid method of the author requiring that the philosophy of all these questions be remitted to his third volume, and that now, for the most part, only the Scripture facts and doctrines be presented.

The wish expressed that Dr. Breckinridge had dwelt more largely on the Nature of sin, and particularly the First sin. How a holy creature *could* sin is a profoundly interesting question, and it is to be regretted that the author, with his evangelical views, had not grappled with it like Bishop Butler, and given us more satisfactory results.

The doctrine of the work respecting hereditary depravity and imputed guilt criticised.

Having viewed the whole treatise, the judgment is expressed that the author has realized his own ideal as far as it could possibly be done. The unction of the book is beyond all praise, and it pervades the whole.

The peculiarities of Dr. Breckinridge's teaching are thus seen to be the separation of dogmatic from polemic Theology, and the concatenation of the truths of religion upon the principle of ascent and descent, or induction and deduction. The question is now raised, whether Dr. Breckinridge's peculiarities as a theological teacher should be copied, and it is answered in the negative.

In conclusion, the attempt is made to find a central principle which shall reduce to unity all the doctrines of religion, and Justification is set forth as that central principle..... *Page* 445

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

Ancient representations, uninspired and inspired, that God cannot be known, and a modern one that His very essence is comprehensibility. To explain such contradictory conclusions, we must understand what has ever been the problem of Philosophy and the methods by which she has investigated it. That problem is to unfold the mystery of the universe—whence it came and how it was produced—being in itself and in its laws—the causes and the principles of all things. In every such inquiry the answer must be—God. But when the further question is, What is God, and how do all things centre in Him? different results are reached, according to the different views of the nature of the universe and its relation to its cause.

Three ancient theories of the universe stated—the third one named makes God the essence of all things, and they but manifestations of His substance.

Modern speculation has pursued essentially the same track, but has taken its departure from a different point. The Material was the ancient point of departure, but the modern is Consciousness. God is made to be the complement of primitive cognitions. Thus both ancient and modern speculation reduces everything to a stern necessity. Pantheism and Positivism, however differing in other respects, unite to deny a Personal God.

I. What is it to be a Person? A simple and primitive belief is not to be defined, but we may describe the occasions on which it is elicited in consciousness, and the conditions on which it is realized.

1. The first circumstance which distinguishes this notion is *Individuality*. Every instance of knowledge is the affirmation of a self and a not-self. When we assert the Personality of God, we mean to assert that He is distinct from all other beings and objects.

2. *Intelligence and will* belong to the idea of Personality.

3. Absolute *Simplicity* is equally essential to self-hood.

These are the properties which we affirm in maintaining the Personality of God. He is an absolutely simple Intelligence, having consciousness and will, who can say "I am," "I will," "I know," and He is not a blind fatality, nor a mere necessary principle or law.

This statement corrects the ignorant misapprehension that *person* implies bodily figure or material shape. God is a Personal Spirit.

II. The difference immense between admitting and rejecting such a Being.

1. In the field of Speculation. Pantheism in every form of it deduces all from God with rigorous necessity, and makes all philosophy *a priori* and deductive. The belief of God makes the universe to be whatever He may will, and philosophy becomes an inquiry into His designs, and the method of induction becomes the true and only method of inquiry. The counsel of His will then becomes the goal of philosophy.

A comparison of what the inductive philosophy has accomplished, with the results of Pantheism.

2. In the field of Morals. Theism makes God a ruler and man a subject. Pantheism deprives us of will and puts us under inviolable necessity. It annihilates all moral difference of actions and makes Sin a fiction. It is hostile to every principle which holds society together, which imparts to states their authority and to the family its sacredness. Speculations which strike at the Personality of God cannot be harmless.

3. In the field of Religion. To make God everything can be no better than to make Him nothing. Piety is subverted when there is no object of its regards. Religion consists necessarily in veneration and love, which must presuppose a Person. The highest form of religion is communion with God. It comes to an end when you remove a Personal God.

4. As to the credibility of Revelation in itself and in its miraculous credentials. Intelligence and will controlling subordinate intelligences may well render miracles necessary. And then if God be a Person, He may be expected to delight in intercourse with His creatures, for Personality seeks union..... *Page* 491

NATURE OF OUR RELATION TO ADAM IN HIS FIRST SIN.

A REVIEW OF BAIRD'S ELOHIM REVEALED.

The central topic of this book is the doctrine of Original Sin. It claims to relieve the question of hereditary sin of most if not all of its difficulties. Acknowledging its great merits in other respects, it is pronounced in reference to its main design a failure. The theory is a numerical identity of nature between Adam and his posterity, so that his sin is not constructively and legally, but strictly and properly, theirs. Generation communicates not a like nature, but the very same. The father substantially and essentially, though not personally, is reproduced in his offspring.

Nothing new in all this—as old as the introduction of Realism into Theology. The book is a reaction against the entire current of modern thought, both in Theology and philosophy—a formal protest against Nominalism and the spirit of the inductive philosophy grounded in Nominalism, and also against the received system of orthodoxy grounded in the same. Statement here of the qualified sense in which the author gives his allegiance to Realism.

1. The first point considered is Dr. Baird's notion of nature, and it is concluded to be the bond of unity to the whole race, sustaining the same relation to human persons which the substance of the Godhead does to the ineffable Three. Adam and his posterity are one substance.

2. The next point is the relation between person and nature—it is that of effect and cause; person is a product of the nature. The person is but an instrument through which the nature works, and it is no great thing to be able to say "I."

3. The third point is the law of generation, which, according to the author, is such that the first man is the efficient cause of the existence of all other men. The reasonings of Dr. Baird in relation to the nature of man resemble those of the Pantheists in relation to the nature of God. Sundry difficulties in the way of his theory of generation suggested.

Upon these grounds the writer explains our interest in Adam's sin; it was strictly ours—as strictly as if committed in our own persons. Adam was every man, and so every man sinned in Adam. But some other conclusions will follow as rigidly as this one: namely—*first*, that every man is responsible for every sin of Adam, seeing that his nature was implicated in every sin of his life; and *secondly*, that Adam, penitent and believing, must have begotten penitent and believing children, seeing that the nature always flows from parent to child as it is in the parent.

The consequences of Dr. Baird's theory to our current theology are—

1. There is no imputation of Adam's sin, but his sin is ours, and we are held to be actually guilty of it.

2. That the twofold relations of Natural and Representative head in which Adam stood to the species are confounded.

That the Reformers did not hold such a theory is proved not by quotations, which would require too much room, but by several considerations —among them that they held our sins to be imputed to Christ. Here Dr. Baird is forced to retract, and does retract altogether, his entire philosophy of guilt and punishment.

Dr. Baird's theory completely solves all difficulties in relation to hereditary sin; the only difficulty is in that theory itself. Given a numerical identity of nature transmitted from father to sons, and the moral condition of it in the one is as inexplicable as in the other. But Adam's children being not Adam, but themselves, two questions arise which have ever been difficult to solve: one, how that which now and here begins its being can begin it in a state of sin without an imputation on the character of God; the other, how that which is inherent can be our crime. Dr. Baird exults in the thought that he has demolished the fortress of Edwards and his disciples, but while their doctrine has difficulties, his is an absurdity.

There are but three hypotheses supposable: 1, That we had an antemundane being and sinned then, which conditions our mundane history; 2, that we had a being in our substance and committed sin in our substance, though not in our persons; 3, that we sinned in another standing in such relations to us as to make us morally one with him. The first two remove the difficulty, but substitute a greater one. The third is the scheme of the Bible.

Dr. Baird's account of the Covenant of Works seriously defective.

His representations of the propagative property of man fanciful, and also degrading to the Divine image in man.....*Page* 515

APPENDIX A.

Discourse delivered by Dr. Thornwell, upon being inaugurated as Professor of Theology.....*Page* 573

APPENDIX B.

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APPENDIX C.

Analysis of Calvin's Institutes, with Notes and Comments. *Page* 597

APPENDIX D.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

SIXTEEN Lectures are here given to the Public: Lecture I. Preliminary and setting forth the Nomenclature and Scope of Theology; Lecture II. On the Being of God; Lecture III. On Man's Natural Ignorance of God; Lecture IV. On the Nature and Limits of our Knowledge of God; Lecture V. On the Names of God; Lecture VI. On the Nature and Attributes of God; Lecture VII. On the Spirituality of God; Lecture VIII. On the Incommunicable Attributes; Lecture IX. On Creation; Lecture X. On Man; Lecture XI. On Moral Government; Lecture XII. On the Covenant of Works; Lecture XIII. On Original Sin; Lecture XIV. On the State and Nature of Sin; Lecture XV. On the Pollution and Guilt of Sin; Lecture XVI. On Degrees of Guilt.

The Author proposed to divide Theology into three parts: the *first* treating of God and of Moral Government in its essential principles; the *second* of Moral Government as modified by the Covenant of Works; and the *third* of the same, as modified by the Covenant of Grace. These Sixteen Lectures cover with tolerable completeness the ground of the first two parts. Death cut short the full execution of his plan. In the good providence of God, however, it has been so ordered that the writings he published during his lifetime may be classified so as to constitute, in connection with these Lectures, in some degree, a full and systematic presentation of the whole of Theology, as he conceived of that Science.

Dr. Thornwell prepared these Lectures for his classes in Theology, and he wrote them all twice over, but he did not prepare them for the press. This will account for the somewhat fragmentary appearance exhibited in the closing parts of one or two of them. Sundry loose papers in his handwriting being found laid away in some of the Lectures, and marked as *Addenda*, they have been put into brackets and inserted, in a different type, in the margin of the pages where they seemed respectively to belong.

At the opening of Lecture VIII. the Author speaks of his intention to take up the subject of the Trinity immediately after closing that discussion of the Attributes; but this promise was evidently forgotten by him, and he proceeds at once, in the Ninth Lecture, to the subject of Creation. Instruction to his classes respecting the Trinity was of course given, Calvin's Institutes being his text-book.

Lectures in Theology.

LECTURE I.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

IF the place of a science depends upon the dignity of its object, the worthiness of its ends, or the intensity and purity of the intellectual energies it evokes, the science to which I am now about to introduce you, must confessedly stand at the head of all human knowledge. It is conversant about the sublimest object, aims at the noblest ends, and calls into play the whole spiritual nature of man. Aristotle, from the intrinsic excellence of the being whose reality and nature it is its business to investigate, pronounced it the first philosophy and the most exalted of sciences; Locke places it "incomparably above all the rest," where it is cultivated according to its own liberal and free spirit, and not degraded "into a trade or faction;" and both Aristotle and Locke regard it "as the comprehension of all other knowledge," so that without it all other knowledge is fragmentary, partial and incomplete. Let us briefly attend first, to the nomenclature, and then, to the scope of this science.

Nomenclature.

I. Its common title is Theology; a word nowhere found in the Sacred Scriptures, though the simple terms of which it is composed are of not unfrequent occurrence. As it was not the office of inspiration to present the truths of salvation in a scientific form,

Vindication of the term *Theology*.

no more than it is the office of nature to present the facts of the universe in a scientific form; as God never makes science for us, but only gives us the data out of which we must construct it for ourselves; it is not to be expected that a word should be found in the Scriptures designating a science which it was not their function to realize. The progress of speculation gives rise to technical terms in religion as well as in philosophy; and when they have been introduced to relieve an obvious need, they are not to be rejected because they are not expressly written in the Scriptures. Many other words, such as *Original Sin*, *Trinity*, *Homoousian*, and *Person*, as applied to the distinctions of the Godhead, which the necessities of controversy led the Church to adopt for the purpose of fixing scriptural truth and guarding against the insinuations of error, are not to be met with in so many syllables in the Sacred Volume. "They are not there," as Turrettin[1] remarks, "as to sounds and syllables, formally and in the abstract; but they are there as to sense, or the thing signified, materially in the concrete." "Where names," says Calvin,[2] "have not been invented rashly, we must beware lest we become chargeable with arrogance and rashness in rejecting them." And in reply to those who, like the ancient heretics, insist upon confining us to the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, to the exclusion of all foreign terms, we may adopt the language of the same illustrious Reformer in another passage of the same illustrious book:[3] "If they call it a foreign term, because it cannot be pointed out in Scripture in so many syllables, they certainly impose an unjust law—a law which would condemn every interpretation of Scripture that is not composed of other words of Scripture." Equally judicious are the remarks of Owen, who, though persuaded that *Theology* was not precisely the term by which the Christian Doctrine should be designated, was yet content to waive his scruples and to merge his diffi-

[1] Loc. I., Quest. 1, § 2. [2] Inst. Lib. I., c. xiii., § 5.
[3] Lib. I., c. xiii., § 3.

culties into acquiescence in prevailing usage. "Many," says he,[1] "pertinaciously oppose the use of the words *theology* and *theologians*. Inasmuch as these words have been imported from the heathen, and have no counterparts in the Sacred Scriptures, it is useless to debate about them with any great zeal. When a name is too pompous and imposing for the thing to which it is applied, its application is injurious; and when its use is a question of keen and ingenious disputation, the uncertainty which attaches to the name is apt to be transferred to the thing. Moreover, as these words have been employed to designate an art and a class of men skilled in it, inconsistent with the simplicity of the Gospel, they seem, neither in their origin nor use, to be adapted to express the Christian Doctrine or its teachers. Still, as in every inquiry, the subject of it must have some name, let us, with proper precautions, remain content with that which common consent has introduced. Let us only be careful to expound with accuracy the thing which the name is designed to represent."

Usage of the term *Theology* among the ancient Greeks.

Among the ancient Greeks, *Theology* was applied to any dissertation, whether in prose or poetry, of which the gods were the subject. It was *λόγος περὶ θεοῦ*. Their genealogies, births and works, their battles, amours and marriages, were all called *Theology;* and the writers who treated of these matters were all called *Theologians*. Pherecydes of Syros was the first who received the name. He was the teacher of Pythagoras, and wrote a book the title of which has been variously given, *ἑπτάμυχος*, *θεοκρασία*, *θεογονία*, *θεολογία*. He is said to have been the first person who treated of such subjects in prose. The poets and mythologists, such as Homer, Hesiod and Orpheus, were all, in the Greek sense of the term, *Theologians*. Aristotle was the first to use *Theology* in a scientific sense. He distributed speculative philosophy into three principal branches—Physics, Mathematics, and Theology; among which he assigned the first

[1] Theologoum, Lib. I., c. 1, § 3.

place to Theology, by which he intended to denote the science of pure existence, or the science of being as being, abstracted from all consideration of its sensible accidents.[1] *Theology* with him, therefore, was only another name for ontology or metaphysics.

Patristic usage.

The Christian fathers used the term to designate the general doctrine concerning God, whether essentially or personally considered. Any one who treated of God and the Holy Trinity was said to theologize. They applied it specially to the doctrine of the Divine nature of Jesus Christ in contradistinction from economy, *οἰκονομία*, the doctrine of His human nature.

Scholastic usage.

Peter Abelard, in the twelfth century, was the first to employ the term in reference to the scientific treatment of the truths of religion. He was followed by the schoolmen, and from them, with occasional protests, sometimes against the term itself, and sometimes against the latitude of meaning allowed to it, it has come down to us.

Modern usage. Wide sense.

It is now used in a wider or in a narrower sense. In the wider sense, it embraces not only a particular discipline, but all the branches of knowledge that are tributary to it. It includes whatever is necessary to fit the teacher of religion for his work—apologetics, hermeneutics, the history of the Church and of doctrines. Even pastoral care and the composition and delivery of sermons are considered, in the *curriculum* of study, as so many departments of Theology.

Narrow sense.

In its narrow sense, it is restricted to a particular science, the science of Religion.

Before proceeding to a more detailed account of its nature, it may be well to apprise you of some of the divisions and distinctions which have been accustomed to be made.

Archetypal and Ectypal.

The first is that of *Archetypal* and *Ectypal*. Archetypal theology has been defined the infinite knowledge which God possesses of Himself.

[1] Metaphys., vi. 1.

But in this sense, it obviously cannot be the standard or measure of knowledge to us. It cannot be the pattern to which ours has to be conformed. Omniscience cannot be separated from the essence of God, and we should have to be infinite and self-existent ourselves, before we could know as God knows. The definition has, therefore, been restricted by others[1] to the standard existing as an idea in the Divine mind of the knowledge which God has willed that we should attain. He has manifested Himself to intelligent creatures, and manifested Himself for the purpose of being known. The measure of knowledge which He thus chooses to communicate is before Him as the archetype or pattern in conformity with which ours must be regulated. When thus conformed to the Divine ideal, our knowledge becomes Ectypal—the express image or resemblance of that which God has proposed as a model.

But even in this sense, it is evident that the idea in the divine mind can never be the immediate standard of truth to us. We cannot enter into the consciousness of God, and therefore cannot know His thoughts, as they lie in His infinite understanding, without some medium of external revelation. They must, in some way, be *manifested* or else remain for ever a secret with Himself. That revelation or manifestation becomes, accordingly, our immediate standard—that is, the archetype of which our knowledge must be the immediate ectype or expression. "No doubt," says Owen,[2] "God has in His own mind an eternal idea or concept of that truth which He wills that we shall attain. And upon this all our theology depends; not immediately, indeed, but upon that act of the Divine will by which it has pleased Him to reveal this knowledge to us. For no one has seen God at any time; the only-begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him.[3] The revelation, therefore, of the mind and will of God—that is, the Word—is that doctrine concerning which we treat, in con-

[1] De Moor, c. I., § 7. See also Turrett., Loc. I., Quest. 2, § 7.
[2] Theologoum, Lib. I., c. iii., § 2. [3] John i. 18.

formity with which all our concepts of God, of His worship, and of the obedience due to Him, must be framed." In other words, the true archetypal theology is not the idea, as a thought or concept in the mind of the Eternal, but that idea as revealed and expressed in the Sacred Scriptures. Hence archetypal theology resolves itself into what is called the *theologic principle.*

Union, Vision, Stadium.

Theology has again been divided, according to the condition in which the possessors of it are contemplated, into the *Theology of Union*, the *Theology of Vision*, and the *Theology of the Stadium.*

The Theology of Union is the knowledge of God and of His will which pertains to the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ by virtue of its personal union with the eternal Word. This knowledge, though finite, is far more perfect in degree than that which any of the saints can acquire. He was anointed with the Spirit above measure. Hence, as implying the unction of the Spirit, it has also been called the *Theology of Unction.* The unction of the Spirit, however, is common with Christ to all believers, and though He possesses it in a larger measure, it is yet not a term which designates what exclusively belongs to Him. The Theology of Union is, therefore, the more distinctive phrase.[1]

The Theology of Vision, called also the *Theology of the Country*, from heaven the dwelling-place of the saints, and the region in which this theology is enjoyed, is, first, the knowledge which angels possess who stand in the presence of God; and next, the knowledge which the spirits of just men made perfect possess when translated to their heavenly home.[2]

The Theology of the Stadium is that which pertains to men while strangers and pilgrims in this mundane state. They are regarded as running a race; the goal and the prize are still before them. It is also called the Theology of Travellers, *Viatorum*, in contrast with the theology of the country, because its possessors are contemplated as engaged in a jour-

[1] De Moor, c. i., § 8.

[2] De Moor, c. i., § 9.

ney to the eternal world. They seek a city which hath foundations. From the circumstance, too, that it is dependent upon study as the ordinary means of acquiring and augmenting it, it has received the name of the *Theology of Study*.[1] This, of course, is the only theology with which we have to do, and when the term is used without a qualifying epithet, it is this alone which is meant. "The term," says Turrettin, "is equivocally and abusively employed when it is applied to the false theology of Gentiles and heretics; less properly when predicated of the original and infinite wisdom by which we conceive God as knowing Himself in an ineffable and most perfect manner (for the word *theology* is not competent to express the dignity of this knowledge), or when applied to the theology of Christ [that of union], or the theology of angels; it is properly employed when applied to the theology of men as travellers."[2]

Natural and Revealed.

Theology has further been distinguished as *Natural* and *Revealed;* these epithets indicating the sources from which the knowledge is derived. In this sense, natural theology is that knowledge of God and of human duty which is acquired from the light of nature, or from the principles of human reason, unassisted by a supernatural revelation. Revealed theology, on the other hand, is that which rests on Divine revelation. This distinction is real, but it is useless. There are truths which reason is competent to discover, as there are other truths which can only be known by a special communication from God. But the religion of man has never been conditioned exclusively by natural truth. In his unfallen condition he was placed under a dispensation which involved a supernatural revelation. He has never been left to the sole guidance of his reason, and therefore a mere natural theology, in the sense indicated, has never been the sufficient explanation of his state.

Natural Theology has been otherwise defined in contradistinction from *Supernatural*, as the science of Natural

[1] De Moor, c. i., § 10.

[2] Loc. I., Ques. 1, § 9.

Natural and Supernatural.

Religion, or the knowledge of that religion which springs from the relations, whether essential or instituted, which subsist between God and the rational creature. It was the theology of Adam before the fall—the theology of the covenant of works; and though remnants of it still linger in the human mind, the perfect knowledge of it can only be obtained from the Christian Scriptures. Supernatural theology is the science of salvation—the doctrines of man's religion considered as a sinner and as redeemed by the mediation of Christ. The true contrast, therefore, is not that of natural and revealed, but that of natural and supernatural—the natural indicating the religion of man in one aspect; the supernatural, his religion in another. Both are equally revealed. The only difference is, that we could know absolutely nothing of the supernatural without revelation, while we can know something of the natural by the unassisted light of reason.

True and False.

The distinction of theology into *True* and *False* is simply, as Turrettin remarks, an abusive application of terms. Error can be called science only by catachresis. True Theology is the only theology, and the doctrines of Pagans, Mohammedans and Heretics receive the appellation in consequence of their relation to the same general subjects.

Theoretical and Practical; Dogmatic and Moral.

Theology has been divided, according to its matter, into *Theoretical* and *Practical*, or *Dogmatic* and *Moral*—the terms in each contrast being used synonymously. The theoretical or dogmatic treats of the doctrines of religion; the practical or moral, of the graces and duties.

Thetic and Antithetic; or Didactic and Polemic; or Dogmatic and Polemic, or Critical, or Elenctic.

According to the manner of treatment, theology has again been divided into *Thetic* and *Antithetic;* or *Didactic* and *Polemic;* or *Dogmatic* and *Polemic*, or *Critical*, or *Elenctic.* The first term in each of these contrasts, *thetic*, *didactic*, *dogmatic*, implies that the doctrines are discussed

without reference to the controversies to which they have given rise. The design is simply to state, to prove and to illustrate the truth. The second term, *antithetic, polemic, critical, elenctic,* implies that the errors of heretics are distinctly refuted. The mode of treatment is controversial. The two methods are often combined, and the theology is then called didactico-polemical, or dogmatico-polemical, or elenctic. It may be well to remark that the phrase *dogmatic theology* does not always bear the sense assigned to it above. The word *δόγμα* may signify either an opinion concerning a doctrine or the doctrine itself. In the former sense, dogmatic theology is the history of opinions concerning the doctrines of religion. In the latter sense, it is the scientific statement of the doctrines themselves. In the former sense, it is principally used in the Church of Rome, and was so employed by Protestant writers until the commencement of the eighteenth century.[1]

Subjective and Objective.

Theology may be considered as a habit of knowledge resident in the mind, or as a body of truth systematically arranged. In the former aspect it is called *Habitual, Subjective, Concrete* and *Utens;* in the latter it is *Objective, Abstract, Systematic* and *Docens.*

Scholastic and Positive.

Theology has again been distinguished with reference to the order and arrangement of its contents, and the general style of discussion, into *Scholastic* and *Positive.* "The positive," says Marck,[2] "is not rigidly restricted to logical rules. The scholastic proceeds in a method more truly disciplinary, a most useful and ancient institution." "Positive and scholastic are not to be distinguished from each other," says De Moor,[3] "as if the one were conversant about the exposition of Scripture, and the other a treatise of doctrines and commonplaces. For doctrines are obviously to be treated in the exposition of Scripture, and commonplaces and doctrines must depend upon the genuine sense and authority

[1] Knapp, vol. i., p. 28, 29. [2] Medull. I., xxv. [3] Comment., c. i., xxv.

of Scripture. The true distinction is that Positive Theology is not strictly confined to logical rules; it gives itself more oratorical freedom of style. Scholastic Theology proceeds in a method more disciplinary [more strictly adapted to teaching] and reduces Divine truths to certain heads according to the rules of logic for the use of Christian schools."

It must be remembered that Marck and De Moor were both advocates of the Scholastic Theology, and have consequently failed to point out its most objectionable feature. Its great defect was not its logical method, nor its contempt of the embellishments of rhetoric, but the manner in which it used its method. It gave no scope to the play of Christian feeling; it never turned aside to reverence, to worship or adore. It exhibited truth, nakedly and baldly, in its objective reality, without any reference to the subjective conditions which, under the influence of the Spirit, that truth was calculated to produce. It was a dry digest of theses and propositions—perfect in form, but as cold and lifeless as a skeleton. What it aimed at was mere knowledge, and its arrangements were designed to aid intelligence and memory. A science of *religion* it could not be called.

The most perfect examples of this method—those who, in the Reformed Church, have been called, by way of eminence, *Scholastics*—are the divines of the Dutch school. It reached its culmination in Gisbert Voetius.[1]

There arose in the same school in the time of Voetius another class of divines who, from their method of treating the truths of religion, were distinguished as *Federalists*.[2]

Federalists.

The celebrated Cocceius was the founder of this class. Among his disciples are ranked Burmann, Braun and Witsius. The regulative principle of their method was the doctrine of the Covenants. They consequently treated religion according to the historical development of the covenants, and infused into their works a decidedly subjective, experimental spirit.

The true method of Theology is, no doubt, a combination

[1] Ebrards' Christl. Dogmat. Abs., ii., § 39. [2] Id., § 40.

of the Scholastic and Positive. Truth must be exhibited warm and glowing from the fullness of the Christian heart. It must be not nakedly truth, but truth according to godliness. The writer must know it, because he has been taught by the Spirit and feels its power. This living consciousness of its preciousness and sweetness and glory is absolutely essential to save a system from the imputation of a frozen formalism. There must be method, but method without life is a skeleton. Infuse life, and you have a noble organism.

Romish Scholasticism.

It may be well to guard you against confounding the Reformed Scholastics with those of the Church of Rome. They had this in common, that they were slaves to a logical method. But they differed widely in the source from which they derived their materials, and, of course, in the nature of the materials themselves. The Reformed Scholastics acknowledged Scripture as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Their problem was to digest, under fit and concatenated heads, the doctrines and nothing but the doctrines of Scripture, with the inferences that lawfully follow from them. The Scholastic Theology of Rome, on the other hand, received as authoritative, in addition to Scripture, the opinions of the Fathers, the Decrees of Councils, the Bulls of Popes, and even the philosophy of Aristotle. It is commonly divided into three periods: 1. The period of its rise. It began in the twelfth century with Peter Lombard's Four Books of Sentences, in which he compendiously arranges the Theology of his time under Distinctions and Sentences, taken for the most part from Hilary, Ambrose and Augustin. The First book treats of God, His Unity and Trinity; the Second treats of Creation, particularly the creation of angels and men, of Free Will, Divine Grace, and of Sin, both native and actual; the Third treats of the Incarnation, of Redemption, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and of the Ten Commandments; the Fourth treats of the Sacraments and of Eschatology. 2. The second period is signalized by the writings

of Albertus Magnus, who introduced the philosophy of Aristotle as a principle or source of authoritative truth in questions of Theology. He flourished in the thirteenth century, and such was his industry that his published works fill twenty-one folio volumes. To the same period belongs Thomas Aquinas, the celebrated pupil of Albert, who, in his great work, the *Summa Theologiæ*, brought the Scholastic Theology to perfection. 3. The third period begins in the fourteenth century, and may be characterized as the period of frivolous discussions. This was the age of Durandus, the Doctor Resolutissimus, and of the still more celebrated Duns Scotus, the Doctor Subtilissimus.

Scope of the Science.

II. Having adverted to these preliminary distinctions in order that you may be at no loss to understand them whenever you meet with them in your reading, I now proceed—1, to define the science according to my own conception of its nature; 2, to develop the plan upon which these Lectures shall be prosecuted; and 3, to indicate the source from which our knowledge must be authoritatively derived.

Definition of Theology.

1. I accept the definition, now generally given, that Theology is the science of religion; that is, it is the system of doctrine in its logical connection and dependence, which, when spiritually discerned, produces true piety. There is a twofold cognition of Divine truth—one natural, resulting from the ordinary exercise of our faculties of knowledge, and the other supernatural or spiritual, resulting from the gracious illumination of the Holy Ghost. The habit which corresponds to the first, like every other habit of science, is mere speculative knowledge. The habit which corresponds to the other is true religion. The doctrine, to use the expressive analogy of St. Paul,[1] is the mould, and religion the image that it leaves upon the heart, which the Spirit has softened to receive the impression. There is, first, the truth, and that is theology; there is next the cordial and spiritual apprehen-

[1] Rom. vi. 17.

sion of it, and that is the obedience of faith, which is synonymous with true religion. In other words, the truth objectively considered is Theology; subjectively received, under Divine illumination, it is religion. In relation to religion, therefore, Theology is a science only in the objective sense. It denotes the system of doctrine, but not the mode of apprehension. The cognition which produces the subjective habit to which Theology corresponds is not knowledge, but faith; and depends, not upon speculation, but upon the Word and the Spirit of God. It knows, not for the purpose of knowing, but for the purpose of loving.

Objections to calling it a Science.

Some have been unwilling to concede to Theology the title of Science, partly on the ground above indicated, that the habit corresponding to it is not natural, but supernatural; and partly on the ground that it does not spring from principles of reason, nor proceed by logical deductions. It does not, in other words, find a place under the Aristotelic definition of science. These objections are easily discharged. The first is obviated at once by the simple consideration that science is used only in an objective sense. And surely no one will deny that revealed truths constitute a logical and coherent system. They are mutually dependent and connected, and capable of being digested under concatenated heads. They form a *true theory* of religion. In the next place, it is not to be overlooked that there is a natural knowledge of theology which is pure science; which rests in speculation; which knows, according to the familiar adage, only that it may know. This natural knowledge is the instrument of spiritual cognition. It is the seed which the Holy Spirit quickens into vital godliness. We must first know as *men* before we can know as *renewed* men. Theology, as thus ending in speculation or in theory, can be taught, but religion must be implanted.

As to the other objection, it may be replied that science should not be arbitrarily restricted to systems excogitated by the wit of man. As one science may begin from prin-

ciples demonstrated in another, so there is no reason why that should not be denominated a science which is logically constructed from the data of faith. We may as readily accept from revelation as from the intuitions of reason our first principles. In each case we begin with the indemonstrable and the given.[1]

With these explanations and distinctions, it is easy to solve the difficulty which has been raised as to the question whether theology is a speculative or practical science—whether its end, in other words, is knowing or doing. Eminent divines have pronounced it to be practical, on the ground that truth is in order to godliness, or that the end of the doctrine is the sanctification of the heart. But it must be recollected that it is not *as science* that the truth sanctifies. It is not the doctrine which transforms by its own inherent and native energies, but the Spirit by a power beyond the truth, and of which the truth is only the instrument. If the question be, however, whether religion, the supernatural product of the truth, is speculative or practical, the answer is, that it is exclusively neither. It is not cognition alone, neither is it action alone, nor feeling alone. It pertains exclusively neither to intelligence, emotions nor will, but it is a peculiar state, a condition of life in which all are blended in indissoluble unity. It is at once love, obedience and knowledge. Spiritual cognition is not bare knowledge, but it is a state of the soul which involves all the energies of our being. It knows by loving and loves by knowing. It discerns and feels by the same operation. It is a form of spiritual life which includes and fuses the intellectual, the active and the emotional elements of our nature. It is the health of the whole soul, the consummation and perfection of our being; or, as Solomon expresses it,[2] "the whole of man." Here our faculties all centre and rest with the fullness and satisfaction of unimpeded exercise. To know is not relig-

Nature of Religion.

[1] Thos. Aquin., Sum. Pars Prima, Quest. 1, Art. 2.

[2] Eccles. xii. 13.

ion, to feel is not religion, to do is not religion; but to know by a light which at once warms and enlightens, which makes us, at the same time and in the same energy, know and feel and do—that is eternal life—the life of God in the soul of man. Logically, we can discriminate the elements which enter into this unity, but really, they can never be divided or separated in the exercises of true religion. We can distinguish, but we cannot disjoin.

Object of Theology.

As religion involves in unity, cognition, emotion and will, there must be some object in which the qualities adapted to these functions and energies are indissolubly united. There must be some object which at once presents truth to the understanding, beauty and grandeur to the emotions, and rectitude to the will. There must be some object in which they become one, as religion is a subjective unity in which they are inseparably blended. There must be an outward corresponding to the inward. That object is God.[1] He is at once the true, the beautiful, the good. As the true, He addresses Himself to the intelligence, as the beautiful to the emotions, as the good to the will. He must be known, and known by spiritual cognition, or there is no religion. "This is life eternal," said the Divine Teacher,[2] "that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." He, in what we are able to know of His character, perfections and works, is the object of all religion. His will, in its purity and holiness, is the measure of all duty, and His glory the standard of all beauty. He is absolutely one; and truth, beauty and holiness are one in Him, and therefore one in the spiritual energies which they evoke in us. It is of the highest importance to understand that religion is not wholly subjective and one-sided. It is not a vague sense of dependence, nor a blind craving, nor an indefinite feeling of emptiness and want. It consists of determinate states of consciousness, which can be logically discriminated as those of intelligence, emotion and will; and these states are condi-

[1] Aquin., Sum. Pars Prima, Quest. 1, Art. 7. [2] John xvii. 3.

tioned by conscious relations to an outward object. There can be no religion without truth; there can be no religion without love; there can be no religion without the spirit of obedience. There must, therefore, be something known; something perceived as beautiful; something acknowledged as supreme. There must be a determinate object or quality for each department of our nature. If religion did not demand determinate cognitions, emotions and volitions, distinct exercises of the spiritual nature conditioned by an object suited to elicit them, a man might be justly called religious whatever he believed, however in other respects he felt, or however he acted, if inwardly he cherished the sentiment of vague dependence and want into which the advocates of exclusive subjectivism resolve the essence of piety. It would signify nothing whether he believed in one God or a thousand, whether he worshipped stocks or stones, or the figments of his own mind; as long as he possessed a certain indescribable subjective state, he could be called truly religious.

In our notion of religion, therefore, there are two errors which we must seek to avoid. The first is, that it is a combination of separable habits; that the knowledge, love and obedience involved in it are successive states, which may be disjoined from each other, but which in their coexistence constitute piety. This is a mistake. Spiritual cognition includes the perception of the beautiful and the good. The same energy which knows God unto salvation knows Him in the unity of His being as the perfection of truth, beauty and holiness. The perception of His glory is the effulgence of this unity.

The second error is, that religion can be understood apart from its object. It must be distinctly recognized as conditioned and determined by the object. It is the nature and relations of the object which make it what it is. The knowledge of God, therefore, as a manifested object, is the indispensable condition of all true religion. The subjective states, as conditioned by this object, differ from analogous

subjective states, as conditioned by other objects, in the circumstance that in the one case they are or ought to be indulged without measure; in the other, under limitations and restrictions. An infinite being demands the homage of the whole soul; a finite being, a homage graduated according to the degree of its excellence. We must love a creature, and trust a creature, with a moderated confidence and love. We must love God and trust God with the whole soul, strength, and heart. Religion, in other words, contemplates its object as the infinite and the absolutely perfect. It is this quality of the object which determines the peculiar character of our religious energies.

The Plan of these Lectures.

2. Man being the subject and God the object of religion, it is evident that we can never hope to understand its doctrines without knowing something of both terms of this relation. Calvin was right in resolving true wisdom into the knowledge of God and of ourselves. It is the relations betwixt us on which religion hinges. God must be given, man given, and the relations between them given, in order to construct a solid science of Theology. It is further evident that these relations are either such as spring from the very nature of the beings, giving rise to duties and obligations, on man's part, that are essential and unalterable; or such as have been instituted by the positive will of the Creator. Given God as Creator and Moral Ruler, and there necessarily emerges a moral government, or a government administered on the principle of distributive justice. Rectitude to a moral creature becomes the natural and unchanging law of its being. God, however, in His goodness, may transcend, though He can never contradict, the principle of justice. He may do more, though He can never do less, than simple equity demands. If He should choose to institute a dispensation under which a greater good than we had any right or reason to expect is held out to us, the nature of this dispensation would have to be considered in treating of the doctrines of religion; and if more than one such dispensation

were established, each would have to be considered, and considered in its historical development, in determining the relations which condition religion. Religion never contemplates its object absolutely, but in relation to us; and instituted relations are as real, and give rise to as real duties, as natural.

The Scriptures assure us that two such dispensations have been instituted, aiming at the same general end, but contemplating man in different states or conditions, and therefore accomplishing the result by different means. One, called the *Covenant of Works*, contemplates man as a moral being, able to obey and fulfil the will of the Creator; the other, called the *Covenant of Grace*, contemplates man as a fallen being, a sinner, incapable of propitiating the favour of God. Both contemplate the exaltation of man to a higher condition of being, to the adoption of sons into God's family.

Answering to a Threefold Division of Theology.

A complete Treatise of Theology, according to these statements, must fall into three parts: (1.) The development of those essential relations betwixt God and man out of which arises a moral government, together with an exposition of the fundamental principles of such a government. This part, embracing the being and character of God, the original state of man, and his natural duties and obligations, might be called Preliminary, or Introductory. (2.) The development of the modification of moral government in its principle and application, as realized in the Covenant of Works. This part might be called Natural Religion, as it treats of the form in which man became related to God immediately upon his creation. (3.) The development of the Covenant of Grace or the scheme of Redemption. This part may be called Supernatural Religion, or the Religion of Grace, and embraces all that is peculiar to Christianity. To state the same thing in another form: the first part treats of God and of moral government in its essential principles; the second part treats of moral government as modified by the Covenant of Works; the third part treats of moral government as

modified by the Covenant of Grace. The point of unity between the two covenants is their concurrence in a common end; the point of divergence, the different states in which man is contemplated. Both are answers to the question, How shall man be adopted into the family of God? But the Covenant of Works answers it with reference to man as a moral creature, in a state of integrity; the Covenant of Grace answers it with reference to man as a sinner, under the condemnation of the law. These three divisions seem to me to exhaust the whole subject of Theology.

Source of our Knowledge of Theology.

3. We come now to the question, Whence are we to derive the truths of Theology, and how are we to know that they are truths? that is, What are their sources, and what is their measure? It is the question concerning what is called the *Principle of Theology*. Three answers have been given—that of the Romanist, that of the Rationalist, and that of the orthodox Protestant.

Principle of the Romanist.

The principle of the Romanist is the authority of the Church. Nothing, in the sphere of religion, is to be accepted as true or received as an article of faith, which has not been proposed and defined by the Church. She still retains the Apostolic commission, and is the only accredited organ of God's Spirit for the instruction of mankind in all that pertains to life and godliness. Her voice is heard, first, in the Scriptures, which are not only received upon her testimony, but are dependent upon her authority for their right to regulate the faith and practice of mankind. They are absolutely nothing except as she endorses them and interprets them. She speaks, in the next place, through the tradition of the Fathers; and, finally, through the writings of Doctors, the decrees of Councils, and the bulls of Popes. The Church, in this view, is the Supreme Oracle of God. She is the final depository and infallible teacher of all the truth that pertains to the salvation of a sinner. She occupies precisely the place which the apostles occupied in the first age of Christianity.

It is needless to say that the Theology which thus emerges is a stiff and lifeless body. Its members are mechanically joined without the organic unity of life. It is a digest of aphorisms and *dicta*, dry as a skeleton and cold as an iceberg.

The whole theory misconceives the office and functions of the Church. She is the product and not the principle of truth, and her own claims must be vindicated on the same grounds on which every other article of faith ultimately rests. The theologic principle must lie back of her, or she could never be recognized as the institute of God. The truth has made her, she has not made the truth. She is a teacher, it is true, but she teaches only as she has been taught; and the principle of Theology must be sought in the principle upon which she proposes the doctrines that she teaches. While, however, the Church is not to be accepted as an arbiter of faith, we must avoid the opposite extreme of treating her instructions with levity and indifference, as if she were entitled to no more respect than a private teacher. Her testimony is a venerable presumption in favour of the Divine authority of all that she proposes. As an organic body, having an historical existence grounded in great truths, having an historic life implicated in these truths—as she has grown out of them and sprung from them—it is obvious that they must have pervaded the consciousness of her children, and that her testimony to them is entitled to a respect analogous to that which attaches to states and empires concerning their origin, their constitution and their government. The Church is not an accidental society that owes its existence to the voluntary compact of its members. It is not a mere political or moral organization. It is a society which has grown out of the facts of redemption. It is the body of Christ; and as appointed to teach, the presumption is that it teaches in His name, and by His authority, the very truths which lie at the basis of its own existence. Its own authority is nothing; it claims to be only a witness, and its testimony is entitled to profound respect until it has been shown that it is not sup-

ported by the Word. It is important that we learn to venerate the Church. The unhappy division into sects, and the perverse abuse of the principle of private judgment, have had a tendency to degrade the Church, in the eyes of many Protestants, to the level of a mere voluntary society. They look upon it as an association for religious purposes, analogous to societies for the promotion of temperance or any other moral end. They overlook its Divine constitution, its historic connection with the facts of redemption, and its organic unity as the supernatural product of the Holy Spirit. They forget that, in its origin and idea, it is the embodiment of the Gospel. Melancthon[1] has, in a few pregnant words, happily defined its sphere and jurisdiction: "As the gospel commands us to hear the Church, so I say that the assembly in which is the Word of God, and which is called the Church, must be heard, even as we are also commanded to hear our pastors. Let us therefore hear the Church teaching and admonishing, but let us not regulate our faith by the authority of the Church. The Church has no right to make articles of faith; she can only teach and admonish." So also in the *Loci Communes*, under the head De Ecclesia: "The Church is, indeed, to be heard as a teacher, but faith and invocation depend upon the Word of God, not on human authority. Let us not despise the Church as teaching, but let us know that the only judge or arbiter of truth is the Word itself."[2] This testimonial and teaching function of the Church is a safeguard against rash innovations, presumptuous speculations and fantastic crudities, and in this light the Reformers steadily maintained it. It is a check upon bold and audacious spirits, who, if they did not hear the Church, might be tempted to indulge in the most absurd and extravagant excesses of doctrine.[3]

Principle of the Rationalist.

The principle of the Rationalist is that human reason is the source and measure of all religious as of all natural truth. Religion is con-

[1] De Ecclesia et Auctoritate Verbi Dei. Opera Omnia, Pars Secunda, p. 124.
[2] Opera Omnia, Pars Prima, p. 129. [3] Loci Com., Ibid.

sidered simply as a department of philosophy, and nothing is to be accepted in it, any more than in any other sphere of philosophical inquiry, which does not authenticate itself to intelligence as the explicit evolution of what is implicitly contained in the human consciousness. Man, according to this theory, is the measure of the universe. The difference betwixt the Rationalist and the Romanist reminds one of the difference noted by Bacon betwixt the empirical and rationalist philosophers. "The empirical philosophers," says he, "are like pismires; they only lay up and use their store. The rationalists are like the spiders; they spin all out of their own bowels. But give me," he adds—and this, as we shall afterward see, illustrates the Protestant principle—"give me a philosopher who, like the bee, hath a middle faculty, gathering from abroad, but digesting that which is gathered by his own virtue."[1]

The defectiveness of this principle is seen, *first*, in the fact that it precludes the supposition of any supernatural revelation. It construes the human mind into an absolute standard of the possibility of truth. It authoritatively pronounces that there can be no intelligible reality beyond the domain of human consciousness. Theology, according to this view, can embrace nothing but what we have called the introductory or preliminary portion of it. This is the only field in which mere reflection and analysis can find materials for working on—the only field in which the data of science can be extracted from ourselves. If there are dispensations superinduced by the voluntary goodness of God, which are solely the offspring of will, and not the evolutions of eternal principles of rectitude, they can, of course, only be known by express and positive revelation. Rationalism undertakes to say that no such dispensations can exist—that there can be no such transactions betwixt God and the creature as those implied in the Covenants of Works and of Grace. The only principle upon which such a doctrine can be maintained is the impersonality of God,

[1] Apophthegms.

and the consequent reduction of all the forces in the universe to a law of blind, immanent necessity. Rationalism, in other words, if maintained as a logical necessity, subverts the first principles of Theism.

In the *next* place, even in the sphere to which it restricts religious truth, it leaves the theologic development in a very precarious and unsatisfactory state. If religion is not a habit of science, but a new and Divine life—if it is not a mode of speculation, but a new mode of being—the analysis of our spiritual phenomena, considered as so many manifestations in consciousness, cannot be expected to give us the key to that Divine life, that work of the Spirit, which underlies all these appearances. Indeed, we should have, consistently with Rationalism, to deny the facts of any such life. The work of the Spirit is as completely subverted as the gracious dispensations of the Father. But should we admit that there is nothing in Christian experience transcending our natural consciousness, still the difficulty of reproducing its phenomena accurately in reflection, and generalizing the laws upon which they are dependent (a difficulty common to all moral and intellectual speculations), is greatly enhanced by the mixture of good and evil, the confusion of holy impulses and remaining depravity, the oscillations of our hopes and fears, which would render it next to impossible to separate the precious from the vile, and to exhibit in scientific form the real principles which constitute piety. Hence, unless we are prepared to restrict the possibility of religious truth to the low sphere of mere natural relations; unless we are prepared to limit the condescension and goodness of God, and to deny to Him any exercise of free-will in His dealings with His creatures; unless we are prepared to change the very nature of religion, and to make it simply a development in the sphere of morality and law,—we are compelled to renounce the principle of the Rationalist as an inadequate source of theologic truth. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in a narrow philosophy. Given dispensations above nature as conditioning

religion, and a revelation express and positive must intervene. Instituted by the voluntary goodness of God, they can only be known by a communication from Him. Products of free-will, and not the result of the nature of things, they can be known only as they are revealed. Here reason, however it may authenticate, can discover nothing by its own light. The relations being given, it can see the duties and obligations thence arising; but the facts which constitute the relations, being deductions from no necessary principles, have to be accepted as matters of faith. To the extent, then, that religion involves anything more than the fundamental and essential elements of moral government, it involves the necessity of Divine Revelation. God alone is competent to testify to His own free acts and determinations.

The Protestant Principle.

Hence, we are driven to the Protestant doctrine, that the true principle, the only infallible source and measure of religious truth, is the Word of God—such a revelation being necessary to a full and perfect development of the laws which determine all our spiritual exercises, and absolutely indispensable to furnish the objects out of which most of them spring. When we speak of Revelation as the final and ultimate authority in theology, we mean the Sacred Scriptures. Nothing else can present the credentials without which the claim to inspiration must be dismissed as uncertified. Tradition can hardly preserve the simplest narrative from exaggeration or perversion for a single month, and to suppose that it has transmitted, unimpaired, Christian doctrines for eighteen centuries is to suppose a miracle which we have no right to expect. Writings are the only permanent records of truth, and God has illustrated His infinite goodness in giving us a perfect and infallible rule of religious truth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are His Word. The Bible, therefore, is the Religion of Protestants—the supreme standard of faith and duty. The authority of the Bible depends upon the question of its inspiration, and the final and conclusive proof of that elicits

a principle in Protestantism which exempts its theology from the dead, traditional formalism of the theology of Rome. That principle is, that the truths of the Bible authenticate themselves as Divine by their own light. Faith is an intuition awakened by the Holy Ghost, and the truth is neither known nor believed until it is consciously realized by the illuminated mind as the truth of God. Intuition does not generate, but it perceives the truth. Reason, under the guidance of the Spirit, appropriates and digests it. The knowledge is immediate and infallible. The Bible becomes no longer a letter, but a spirit, and religion is not a tradition, but a life. Hence, Protestantism has all the warmth and vigour and spirituality of Rationalism, without its dangers of confounding fancies with facts, dreams with inspiration. The Word supplies an external test, which protects from imposture and deceit. The Spirit educates and unfolds a Divine life under the regulative guidance of the Word. The Bible and the Spirit are therefore equally essential to a Protestant theology. *Theologia* (says Thomas Aquinas) *a Deo docetur, Deum docet, et ad Deum ducit.* It springs from God as the source, treats of God as its subject, and tends to God as its end.

Reason and Revelation.

The respective spheres of Reason and Revelation, according to the foregoing views, are very distinctly marked. In the department of necessary moral truth—that is, of essential rectitude—reason is a source of knowledge; but as it is darkened and obscured by sin, its principles and deductions are not infallible. Revelation presents these data, as the reason would have presented them, in its normal state, free from uncertainty and error. When so presented, even the fallen reason accepts them, perceives their autopistic character, and rectifies its own aberrations and mistakes. Here revelation brings out into the clear light of reflection what before was involved in spontaneous consciousness, but not distinctly eliminated, or, if eliminated, mixed with falsehood. The primitive intuitions of reason are always cer-

tain, but it is one thing to feel their power and quite another to reduce them to formal and precise propositions. No revelation can contradict them, but it may elicit them as distinct and manifest phenomena of consciousness.

In the *next* place, in reference to supernatural dispensations, reason, though wholly incapable of discovering the data in the free acts of the Divine Will, yet when these are once given by revelation as matters of fact, can discern the obligations which naturally arise from them. It can discern the fit and becoming, the *pulchrum et honestum* in the new circumstances in which we are placed, and it can collect, compare and elaborate into scientific unity the truths which are brought within its reach. But in no case is reason the ultimate rule of faith. No authority can be higher than the direct testimony of God, and no certainty can be greater than that imparted by the Spirit shining on the Word. An accredited revelation, like an oath among men, should put an end to controversy.

But the question may arise, Can that be an accredited revelation which contains things that are contradictory to reason? If by reason we are here to understand the complement of those primitive truths and cognitions, with the legitimate deductions from them, which enter into the universal consciousness of the race, spontaneously considered, there is and can be but one answer. These fundamental facts of consciousness cannot be set aside without annihilating all intelligence. To deny them, or to question them, is to reduce all knowledge to zero, or to skepticism. No revelation, therefore, can contradict them without committing an act of suicide; it would destroy the very condition under which alone it can be known and received as a revelation.

But suppose that the laws of intelligence and the primitive intuitions of the soul are not violated by what professes to be a Divine revelation, is reason competent to judge, upon internal grounds, of the truth or falsehood of its contents? Here we must make a distinction. The contents of revelation may embrace things that are strictly natural, that fall

within the sphere of human experience and observation. There may be allusions to geography and history, to civil and political institutions, to the manners, customs and condition of different countries and people. Surely, in relation to these the human understanding, when furnished with the proper sources of knowledge, is competent to judge. It deserves to be remarked, however, that truth in these respects is only a presumption but not a proof, of truth in others. A book may contain no blunders in the sphere of the natural, and yet not be from God. Neither, on the other hand, would error in these respects convict a professed revelation of imposture, unless it claimed to be infallible in all matters. It is conceivable that God might leave men to themselves when touching upon subjects within the compass of their natural powers, and yet supernaturally guard them from error in all that transcends the sphere of experience. The contents of a revelation may—indeed to justify its name it *must*, contain things that are strictly supernatural—things which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man to conceive. In relation to this class of contents, reason has no standard of judgment. It cannot say beforehand what a revelation ought to contain; it cannot even prescribe the form in which it should be given; and therefore cannot object to it for containing things contrary to an arbitrary opinion. The objects of cognition, both in the natural and supernatural world, must alike be given. As it is the office of intelligence to study nature as it is, and not to deny its existence because it happens not to be what our vain fancies imagine it ought to be, so it is the office of reason to study the facts of revelation as they are given, and not to indulge in chimerical speculations as to what ought or ought not to have been communicated. The attitude of reason here is simply that of a recipient. It listens and accepts the Word. As the outer world manifests itself, and is not created by reason, so the supernatural world is manifested through revelation, and is not the product of speculation. As we depend absolutely upon our

senses and faculties for the knowledge of material phenomena, so we must depend absolutely upon Divine revelation for all supernatural phenomena. They may be mysterious; that is to be expected. They may be incomprehensible; that naturally results from their transcendent character. But we have mysteries in nature, and we carry in our own bosoms proofs of a substance whose reality cannot be doubted, but whose being cannot be fathomed by the line of human intelligence. The soul and self are as inexplicable as the sublime mysteries of Scripture.

But while reason cannot judge of the truth or falsehood of supernatural data upon any internal grounds, there is an important function which she may perform. She may illustrate the harmony of Divine truth, not only with itself, but with all other truth. She may show that the same eternal principles which are exemplified in Nature are exemplified also in Grace, and that the same objections which an arrogant philosophy arrays against the one press with equal force against the other. God is one, and however manifold His works, they must all bear the marks of the same hand. They are all really, though in different degrees, impressions of Himself. They are all, in a certain sense, His word.

Reason may also derive an internal proof of the authenticity of Revelation from the beauty, symmetry and glory of the dispensation it makes known. The supernatural world is not a chaos. Redemption is not an arbitrary series of events. A glorious plan pervades it, and the whole scheme from its beginning to its consummation is a marvellous exhibition of the manifold wisdom of God. Unassisted reason, when it inquires in a candid spirit, can partially discern the traces of Divine intelligence and glory, but when illuminated by the Spirit it wants no other evidence of Divine interposition. The truth overpowers it with a sense of ineffable glory, and it falls down to worship and adore; for faith is only reason enlightened and rectified by grace.

LECTURE II.

THE BEING OF GOD.[1]

THERE are three questions in relation to God which a competent theology must undertake to solve: the first concerns His existence, the second His nature, the third His perfections,—*An sit Deus? Quid sit Deus? Qualis sit Deus?* We begin with the first.

An sit Deus?

Religion, which is the spiritual knowledge of God, we have seen, is not a single energy, intellectual, moral or emotional; nor a state of mind in which each energy succeeds the other so rapidly as to make the impression that it is com-

Religion, the highest unity of our being.

[1] [1. If the amount of speculation which a subject has elicited is any indication of the difficulties which surround it, the question of the Being of God must be the most difficult within the compass of human inquiry. It would seem to be the universal sentiment of philosophers, the answer of Simonides the poet to Hiero the king. But in this case, it is not so much the difficulty as the transcendent importance of the subject that has provoked such a mass of discussion. The number of books upon the elementary question of Theology is perhaps greater than upon any other topic within the whole sphere of speculation. The controversy with Atheists has perhaps exceeded in the mass of its contributions the controversy with Deists. The confessed importance of the two inquiries, Is there a God? and, Are the Scriptures a revelation from God? is the secret of the interest they have elicited.

2. In this case, as in many others, it has happened that the very simplicity of the truth has been an occasion of perplexity. Many have sought for erudite proofs of what God meant should be plain and addressed to every understanding. Self-evident truths require no proof; all that speculation can do is to distinguish them and to indicate the characteristics which define them. The attempt to prove the existence of matter, of an outward world, of our own souls, is simply absurd. They authenticate themselves. All that philosophy should undertake is to

posed of them all as separate and separable elements. It is the whole energy of our being carried up to the highest unity. It is the concentration of our entire spiritual nature into one

show that these are primitive cognitions, and to be received upon their self-manifestation with an absolute faith. The Being of God is so nearly a self-evident truth that if we look abroad for deep and profound arguments, or expect to find it at the end of a lengthened chain of demonstration, we shall only confuse what is plain, and mystify ourselves with vain deceit.

3. If the end of our being is religion, if we are made to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever, there must obviously be a special adaptation of our nature to the knowledge of God. If religion is not wholly a delusion, the evidence of the Being of God must lie very close to us. This was the confession of the ancient philosophers, of Socrates and Plato.

4. Hence, we find that the belief of a Deity has been coextensive with the race. It is as natural to man to be religious as to be social or political. His mind craves a God even more intensely than his heart craves society. There must, therefore, be something in man which recognizes the existence of God, without the necessity of laboured and formal demonstrations. It must be an obvious and a palpable truth. The difficulties which have emerged in speculation have been the result of trying to be deep where the subject was plain and patent.

5. This is confirmed by the fact that the very same process of speculation which has superinduced doubt in relation to the Being of God, has also superinduced doubt as to the existence of an outer world and the existence of our own souls. The arguments which have led men to say that there is no God, have also led them to deny the reality of any substance, whether material or spiritual.

6. The result of these skeptical speculations has been not the proof of the non-existence of God, but the impossibility of proving that He does exist. There is and can be no demonstration of Atheism. The utmost that can be done is to affirm that if a God exists we cannot certify the fact to our own consciousness.

7. There is no doubt that there is an antecedent credibility in favour of the existence of God, from the fact that this hypothesis is a satisfactory solution of all the phenomena of the universe. It gives one mystery, the Divine Being Himself, and solves every other mystery. It pours a flood of light upon all else besides. It begins with the incomprehensible, but it ends in the comprehensible. Every other system begins and ends in the incomprehensible. If the question of God had none but a speculative interest connected with it, this presumption would perhaps be more readily acknowledged.

8. Revelation is as really a proof of the existence of God as nature. It is not exclusively a question of natural theology, in the sense of that theology which depends upon the unassisted light of reason.]

form of life. It is a condition in which intellect, conscience and heart are blended into perfect union. One exercise cannot be separated from the others. It is hence neither speculative nor practical—it is a state in which speculation and practice completely coincide. If this view of the nature of religion be correct, the cognition of God, who is the object matter of religion, must be the contribution of all our faculties, and not the result of any single department of our nature. Give man mere intellect without conscience, will or heart, and he could never attain to any just conception of his Maker. He might comprehend a single relation of God—that of cause; but apart from the power necessary to produce the given effect and the intelligence necessary to explain the order of the world, he would know nothing of what his philosophy compelled him to postulate as the first cause. A God who is merely intelligence and power is no God at all. He might be sufficient to satisfy the needs of speculation in the sphere of ontology—a substance among substances, a cause among causes—but there would be no more impulse to worship Him than there is to worship the secondary causes which emerge in the same region of thought. The other faculties necessarily imply intelligence. There can be no conscience without knowledge—it is a peculiar form of cognition. There can be no emotion without knowledge—that also is a special form of cognition.

The knowledge of God, the contribution of all our faculties.

In appreciating the argument for the Being of God it is important to recollect that each higher degree of life embraces all the others. The animal has all that belongs to the vegetable, and something more; the rational has all that belongs to the animal, and something more; the moral has all that belongs to the rational, and something more; and the religious has all that belongs to the moral, and something more. The addition in each case is not something capable of being detached—it is fused into the other. The two make a new form of life as simple and as indivisible as each

Religion, the highest form of life,

element separately. The animal is not the vegetable, *plus* a something which you can separate from it, but the vegetable in perfect fusion with the something that modifies it. In the same way, the rational and the animal are not two factors which make up a compound in which you can discriminate the precise posture of each, but a whole, as single and indivisible as each of the factors it combines. But while every higher includes every lower form of life, and reduces it to the unity of its own being, yet what is really inseparable may be considered as logically distinct, and we may approximate a just view of the higher by apprehending the nature of all the lower it absorbs. Religion, accordingly, being the highest form of life, constituting the very perfection of our spiritual being, and fulfilling all the functions ascribed by the Greek philosophers to their Wisdom, though possessing a strict and perfect unity, may be considered in reference to the lower forms of life it includes, and in this way a clearer notion conveyed than could be attained without this logical resolution. The best way to authenticate our knowledge of God is to show that it is the consummation of our being—that without God man is left a maimed and imperfect creature. Each element of his spiritual being points to God, and when all are combined they give, in their normal condition, the true and living God of Revelation. This method of presenting the subject is simple and progressive, and the result when attained is seen to be exactly the being that we seek. It is felt to be the same God whom every part of our nature proclaims, since the voice of every part is finally taken up in the voice of the whole.

and the consummation of our being.

In conformity with this method we may look upon man successively as a rational being, as a moral being, as a religious being; and we shall see that speculation in its fundamental law reveals a God; moral distinctions are grounded in His nature and government; and religion contemplates Him as a being of ineffable beauty and glory.

Threefold constitution of Man.

I. Let us consider, first, the testimony of speculative reason. By speculative reason we mean that principle in man which prompts him to account for existing phenomena. His apprehensive faculties furnish him with the materials of knowledge; reason digests these materials into science by generalizing the facts and ascertaining the causes upon which they depend. It answers the question, Why things are as we see them to be? The root of this faculty is the law of causation. This law is not, as some philosophers have represented it, a deduction from experience; nor is it, as Hamilton imagines, a confession of our impotence to conceive an absolute commencement. It is a fundamental law of belief by which the order of existence is made capable of detection by human intelligence. This law is not, as Kant would have us believe, a merely regulative principle, which adjusted the relations of our thoughts without any objective validity or any power to certify that things really were as we thought them. On the other hand, every law of thought is, at the same time, a law of existence. If our thoughts represent real beings, the connections of our thoughts will answer to the connections of the things. If they represent imaginary beings, then the connections are connections that would obtain if the things were real. The truth is, intelligence would be a mere delusion if the fundamental law of reason were shut up within the limits of a rigorous subjectivity. It would be impossible to extend our knowledge beyond the circle of actual experience. Even the testimony of others as a source of knowledge would have to be excluded, since the ground upon which we ultimately credit the reports of others is this same law of cause and effect. Taking, then, the law of causation as at once a law of thought and a law of existence, whenever it sets out from the real it must necessarily lead to the real. If we have effects that are real, we must find causes that are real. In the theistic argument we begin, in the

The testimony of speculative reason.

The law of causation, a fundamental law of belief.

This law is a law of existence, as well as of thought.

first place, with beings that are real. We set out from facts which fall within the sphere of our experience. We start from the world around us. Here is being, and being in a constant state of flux and change. It is being that began. If it were necessary, it would be immutable. Whatever necessarily is, necessarily is just as it is and just what it is.

The contingency of the world proves a necessary, eternal cause.

The contingency of the world is as obvious as its existence. An infinite succession of finite and changeable objects is a contradiction. If the world began, it must have had a Maker. The conclusion is as certain as the law of causation. The conclusion is not that we must think it as having had a Maker—that to us it is incogitable in any other relation, though in truth it might have had an absolute beginning—but that it exists under this condition of having been caused. To put the argument in another form: If there is any being at all, there must be eternal, unchangeable, necessary being. If there is any existence, there must be self-existence to explain it. Either the beings that we see are self-existent, or they have been made. If they have been made, there must be a Maker—and as there cannot be an infinite regression of causes, the Maker must be absolutely underived and self-sufficient. This is the argument in a brief compass which results from the law of causation as applied to the contingency of the world. It is simple, conclusive, unanswerable. You will perceive that it consists of two elements: one, *a posteriori*, given in experience—the contingency of the world; the other, *a priori*, contained in the constitution of our nature.[1]

[1] [The existence of God is really a cognition of the human soul, like the cognition of matter or of ourselves. It is so inseparable from the development of reason that wherever we find a man, we find one who is not a stranger to the existence of God. The real problem of Theology is not to prove that a God exists, as if she were instructing the ignorant or imparting a new truth to the mind, but to show the grounds upon which we are already in possession of the truth. It is to vindicate an existing faith, and not to create a new one. The belief itself is universal—as universal as the belief in the soul. However men may differ on other points, they agree in this. Religion is prior to civilization, and has been justly represented as the first teacher of the race. The question is: How this

The *a priori* element is a guarantee for the objective validity of all that the reason in obedience to it deduces from the other. You can state the argument in the form of a syllogism, but you are not to suppose that the conclusion flows from the major premise as something contained in it.[1] On the other hand it is simply legitimated by it, and the real character of the ratiocination is that of immediate inference. By the very nature of the reason, in apprehending the world as contingent we apprehend it as having been originated. We are not conscious of any succession of ideas at all. It seems to be an intuition of God, which is awakened in the soul upon the occasion of its coming into contact with the world. But God is not an object of intuition. If He were, we would know Him by some faculty of immediate perception. We know Him only mediately through a law of reason which gives His being as an immediate inference from the facts of experience.

The being of God is proved by an immediate inference.

The argument from the contingency of the world[2] is what Kant has called the cosmological proof. Like all the other proofs from pure reason, he has pronounced it to be a specious sophism; and yet he admits again and again that it is the necessary progress of our reason. It is certainly remarkable that our reason should be so constituted as necessarily to seduce us into error; that in obeying its most urgent and

This cosmological argument not sophistical,

belief arose, and upon what grounds it may be authenticated? We shall attempt to show that it is the necessary offspring of reason—that it springs from the very constitution of the soul.]

[1] [The argument is not a syllogism, it is not a demonstration; and God is not the object of an intuition, but it is an immediate inference, like the connection between thought and existence. One truth necessarily implies another, and this necessary connection is intuitively perceived. Reason is so constructed that as soon as it cognizes any being, it must cognize God. The inference from one to the other is immediate, intuitive, necessary.]

[2] [The argument from the contingency of the world is also developed by Des Cartes, in another form, as an argument from the imperfection of the world. It is beautifully expanded by Cousin, p. 127, *seq.*]

imperative impulses we should only entangle ourselves in the mazes of delusion, instead of being conducted into the clear light of truth. If reason in such inquiries were presumptuous or perverted, if she were acting in contradiction to her own laws, the fallacious result could be easily explained. But when it is confessed that she is pursuing the tendencies of her own nature, that she is impelled by the very nature of her constitution not only to engage in these speculations, but to draw these very conclusions, the inference would seem to be that reason was given, not as an organ of truth, but as a faculty of deceit. The manner in which Kant undertakes to convict reason of sophistry in the conduct of the cosmological argument will have no weight with those who are not imbued with the principles of the Critical philosophy as to the nature of human knowledge. He takes for granted that the laws of thought have only a subjective validity, and that the matter of our knowledge is only a series of subjective phenomena. Of course the argument must be deceitful according to a philosophy like this.

yet it is defective.

It must be admitted, however, that this cosmological argument fails to give us any other conception of God that that of necessary being. It stops at His absoluteness. From His necessity and eternity you can infer nothing as to His nature and attributes. He is the first substance, the cause of all things, while unconditioned Himself.

The teleological argument.

Reason, in obedience to the same law of causation, takes another step in which she equally sets out from the facts of experience. It is impossible to contemplate the universe, as far as it falls under our observation, without perceiving that it is really a *kosmos*, a scene of order and of law. The most untutored peasant, as well as the profoundest philosopher, is alike capable of apprehending the general fact. The motions of the heavenly bodies, the succession of the seasons, the alternation of day and night, the exquisite organization of plants and animals, and especially the structure

of the human frame, are such conspicuous manifestations of order that the most careless observer cannot fail to be impressed with it. The perception of this order does not require a knowledge of the ends to be answered by it. We may be satisfied that it exists where we do not understand its ultimate purpose or design. A man ignorant of machinery may feel that there is a plan in the structure of a watch, or of a ship, or of a cotton-mill, though he does not comprehend the subordination of the parts, nor how the end they aim at is answered. He may see some ancient monument of art, and be struck with the order that reigns in it, though he has no idea of the purpose for which it was intended.

General order,

General order is one thing, special adaptations are another. In special adaptations we know the end and understand the means by which it is accomplished. The eye as adapted to vision is an instance of special adaptation; the stomach as adapted to the functions of digestion is another. Science is constantly enlarging our knowledge in the wonderful adaptations of nature, and science is daily deepening the impression of general order. Indeed, the tendency of physical science is to make a god of the law of order—to resolve it into a primordial necessity which precludes the possibility of any breach upon its course. Now here is an effect, a phenomenon, to be accounted for. There must be a cause of this order, and reason intuitively perceives that intelligence is the only explanation of it, as necessary being is the only explanation of contingent being. Order implies thought, purpose, design. It is the prerogative of mind alone to plan and to arrange. The adjustment of means to ends is a combination of reason, and reason knows her own footprints. This is what Kant calls the physico-theological argument. It is commonly called the argument from final causes, or the teleological proof. Kant[1] admits that it deserves to be

and special adaptations,

prove an intelligent cause.

[1] Crit. Pure Reason, p. 383. Bohn's Trans.

mentioned with respect. "It is," he says, "the oldest, the clearest, and that most in conformity with the common reason of humanity. It animates the study of nature, as it itself derives its existence and draws ever new strength from that source. It introduces aims and ends into a sphere in which our observation could not of itself have discovered them, and extends our knowledge of nature by directing our attention to a unity, the principle of which lies beyond nature. This knowledge of nature again reacts upon this idea—its cause—and thus our belief in a Divine Author of the universe rises to the power of an irresistible conviction. For these reasons it would be utterly hopeless," he adds, "to attempt to rob this argument of the authority it has always enjoyed. The mind, unceasingly elevated by these considerations, which, although empirical, are so remarkably powerful and continually adding to their force, will not suffer itself to be depressed by the doubts suggested by subtle speculations; it tears itself out of this state of uncertainty the moment it casts a look upon the wondrous forms of nature and the majesty of the universe, and rises from height to height, from condition to condition, till it has elevated itself to the supreme and unconditioned Author of all."

This argument, insufficient of itself,

It must be confessed, however, that this argument, if taken alone, fails to demonstrate the existence of an infinite Author of the universe. It proves intelligence, but it does not prove that that intelligence may not be derived. It exhibits God as arranging the order which prevails. He is only, in the light of it, the Architect of nature. For all that appears, matter may have existed independently of His will; and His knowledge of it may have been derived from observation and experience analogous to our own. He may have studied the properties and laws of the materials He has used in the structure of the universe, and His power may, like ours, consist in obedience to the laws of the substances with which He had to deal. The argument, in other words,

does not conduct us beyond a subtle anthropomorphism. In itself, therefore, it is incomplete, but when added to the cosmological which gives us a Creator—an infinite, eternal, necessary Being—we perceive that this Being is intelligent, that He is an almighty Spirit, and that the thoughts of His understanding have been from everlasting. Here, too, as in the other case, the argument is an immediate inference from a determinate form of experience, that of order and beauty, to a designing mind—the inference being guaranteed by a law of thought which is, at the same time, a condition of existence.

but it complements the preceding one, and together they demonstrate God

These two arguments exhibit the steps by which, in the sphere of speculation, the reason ascends to an intelligent Author of the Universe. They are steps which, in the normal development of reason, would seem to be inevitable. It is prompted, by its very nature, to inquire into the causes of things. This is the foundation of all philosophy. Take away the notion and the belief of cause, and the idea of a *Kosmos* becomes absurd, and that of philosophy a palpable contradiction. Unless, therefore, our reason is a lie, there is a God who made us and ordained the order which constitutes the beauty and the glory of the Universe.[1] These heavens and this earth, this wondrous frame of ours and that more wondrous spirit within, are the products of His power and the contrivances of His infinite wisdom. External nature, to reason in her normal state, becomes an august temple of the Most High, in which He resides in the fullness of His being, and manifests His goodness to all the works of His hands. Nothing is insignificant, nothing is dumb. The heavens declare His glory. The firmament showeth His

Reason, in its normal use, ascends to God,

[1] [We must study God in His works, as children who cannot look the sun in the face behold its image in the limpid stream. Simon., p. 25.

One may almost define philosophy in all its branches as a method of reaching the infinite through the finite. Simon., p. 29.

He adds, "all philosophy is full of God, and all the sciences are full of philosophy."]

handiwork. The day elicits from the countless multitude of beings revealed by its light a tribute to His praise; and the night, with its array of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres wheeling unshaken through the void immense, utters a sound which is audible to every ear and intelligible to every heart. Science, when it has conducted us to God, ceases to speculate and begins to adore. All the illustrations which it has gathered in the fields it has explored are converted into hymns, and the climax of its inquiries is a sublime doxology.

and adores Him.

Among the arguments of speculative reason, it has been usual to class what has been called the *ontological* proof. This pretends to be an *a priori* demonstration of the existence of God. It is found, in its germ, in the philosophy of Plato, and under different forms of development it has been transmitted, through the Schoolmen, to Des Cartes and Leibnitz. The German philosopher put the last touch to it. Indeed he has so modified it that it requires careful attention to recognize, in its new form, the speculations of Anselm, and even of Plato before him. The new form, as given by Kant,[1] is substantially this: "Perfect being contains all reality, and it is admitted that such a being is possible; that is to say, that its existence implies no contradiction. Now, all reality supposes existence. There is, therefore, a thing possible in the concept of which is comprised existence. If this thing be denied, the possibility of its existence is also denied, which is contradictory to the preceding." The argument is thus expressed by Leibnitz himself: "*Ens, ex cujus essentia sequitur existentia, si est possibile, id est. Est axioma identicum demonstratione non indigens. Atqui Deus est ens ex cujus essentia sequitur ipsius existentia. Est definitio. Ergo Deus, si est possible, existet per ipsius conceptus necessitatem.*" This means that God is, if He is possible, because His possibility—that is to say, His essence itself—carries with it His existence, and because it would be a

The ontological proof criticised.

[1] Cousin, Philos. Kant, pp. 120, seq.

contradiction to recognize this essence and refuse to it existence.[1]

To me, the objections of the German critic to the conclusiveness of this argument are perfectly insuperable. A subjective necessity of thought implies an objective necessity of existence only when the thought is a real thing. We may imagine a being, and attribute to it attributes which necessarily imply other attributes; but these attributes cannot be inferred to have a real existence unless the subject to which they are ascribed is first postulated as real. We may conceive a being in which necessity of existence is posited as an attribute; but if the subject is only a conception of the mind, the necessity of being is equally subjective. We cannot pass from thought to existence unless the thought begins in existence. "Existence," as Kant has justly remarked,[2] "is not an attribute, a predicate which determines the idea of the subject. When I say that God is all-powerful, the attribute *all-powerful* determines the idea of God; but when I conceive God as simply possible or real, the idea of Him rests the same in both cases; here it is certain the real involves nothing more than the possible. If it were otherwise, the idea which we have of any thing would not be complete until we had conceived it as possible. It follows that if I conceive a being as perfect, I may perplex myself as much as I please by trying to evolve from the idea the real existence. The question of existence always remains, and it is not from the conception of the object conceived as possible that we can draw the concept of its reality. We are therefore obliged to quit the concept of an object if we would accord to it real existence."

It terminates in empty abstractions.

Whatever charm this species of reasoning has for speculative minds, it is certain that it can terminate only in empty abstractions. The truth is, the secret of its influence is the firm conception and belief of a necessary being as actually existing which we derive from the cosmological proof.

[1] Cousin, Phil. Kant, p. 123.

[2] Cousin, ibid., p. 122.

There we start out from the real and are conducted to the real in this most sublime and overpowering of all conceptions. The idea of necessary being never emerges until the fact of contingent being is given,[1] and then in this fact the reason perceives by immediate intuition that the eternal and independent is given too. Having thus reached the concept of necessary existence, we proceed to draw inferences from it as a real characteristic of God.

From the nature of the case, the being of God never can be demonstrated in the strict and proper sense of the term. He is contained in nothing. It may be manifested, but not deduced.

Result to which we have been conducted.

Consigning, therefore, this argument to the tender mercies of the metaphysicians, let us see the result to which we are conducted by the other two. If the conclusion which they yield is an immediate inference guarantied by the fundamental law of intelligence, the conclusion inevitably follows that we can know nothing aright without knowing of God. He becomes the *principium cognoscendi*, as well as the *principium essendi*. He is the fountain to which all the streams of speculation converge. Truth is never reached—the *why* is never adequately given until you ascend to Him. Intelligence finds its consummation in the knowledge of His name.

Conscience in man demands the existence of God.

II. We come now to a higher spiritual energy or a higher form of spiritual life. We are to contemplate man as a moral being, and we shall find that his conscience, still more imper-

[1] We may observe, further, that we do not positively think necessary being; we only believe it as the indispensable condition or cause of the contingent. It does not lie in the consciousness as an absolute dictum—"There is necessary being;" but only as a hypothetical consequent—"There must be if there is contingent being." The whole force of the belief turns upon this *if*. Take away contingent being, and consciousness knows nothing of the necessary. We deny, therefore, the Cartesian assumption that we have the idea of a necessary being as an original and absolute datum of consciousness. To admit its hypothetical character is to resolve the argument into the cosmological.]

atively than speculative reason, demands the existence of God. Our moral cognitions are wholly unintelligible upon any other scheme than that of a personal God. The peculiarity of these cognitions is that they involve the sense of personal responsibility. The right comes to us in the form of commands and not of simple propositions; it is known as duty; it is felt to involve the distinction of merit and demerit, or of rewards and punishments administered upon the principle of distributive justice. Now there are three aspects in which these cognitions justify the immediate inference of a just and righteous God: 1. Considered as commands they imply an Author who has a right to prescribe laws—an Author whom we are bound to obey. A law without a lawgiver is unmeaning jargon. Conscience appears in us as the organ of an authority not its own. It is in its normal state the voice of God in the soul of man. 2. Consider these commands as giving rise to a sense of duty, and there emerges the idea of a judge to whom we are responsible. Obligation and superior will are correlative terms; where there is no superior will there may be rectitude, but there cannot be duty. God is in no sense the subject of obligation. Conscience, then, in proclaiming a duty proclaims a supreme will. 3. Consider conscience as giving rise to the conviction of good and ill desert, of rewards and punishments justly and righteously distributed in contradistinction from mere pleasures and pains, and you have first a moral government directly affirmed, and then the prospect of perfect happiness to the righteous unconditionally held out. This connection betwixt happiness and virtue must be a sheer delusion unless He who promises is able also to perform; but He cannot be able to perform unless He possesses unlimited dominion over all beings, states and conditions. Hence emerges the notion of an infinite and all-powerful Ruler, with a will morally determined, as well as with intelligence and mere benevolence of character.

Three aspects in which our moral cognitions lead to the immediate inference of this just and righteous Being.

This is an outline of the argument from our moral

cognitions which might be impressively expanded. It is enough to put you in possession of the steps of the reasoning. This argument, it is conceded by Kant and Sir William Hamilton, is conclusive and irresistible. In conscience they recognize an immediate affirmation of God. How upon the principles of the Kantian philosophy it is any more valid than the arguments from speculative reason, I am unable to comprehend. If intelligence is false in its fundamental utterances, it is difficult to see upon what ground the veracity of conscience can be consistently maintained. If man's nature is a lie in one respect, it may be a lie in the other. *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.*

Kant and Hamilton upon this argument.

But what I wish particularly to impress upon you is, that as man rises to a higher sphere of spiritual life, he rises to more precise and definite conceptions of the character and attributes of God, and has the highest evidence that the subject which he cognizes in the sphere of speculation is precisely the same subject that meets him in the sphere of duty. To the notions of intelligence and goodness are now added the notions of rectitude, of justice, of will. To the relations of a Creator and great First Cause are now added the relations of law, of responsibility, of moral government, of rewards and punishments. Every element of personality is now secured. We have a Being that knows, that wills, that judges. Then, as in the notion of the ultimate felicity of virtue there is implied an absolute dominion over all things that exist, the God whose law is virtue is seen to be the same as He who created the heavens and the earth, and gave to them their exquisite beauty and order. There is no pretext for saying that intelligence reveals one God and conscience another. In the notion of responsibility, they both meet, and are found to be one and the same.

In the higher sphere of life man rises to more definite conceptions of God and to the sense of responsibility.

The sense of responsibility, or the authority of conscience, is perhaps the argument most efficacious of all in keeping

alive the sense of God. As long as it is implicated in the conviction of duty, men must obliterate from their minds all moral distinctions before they can get quit of the belief of a God. It is an argument which we carry with us. It is in our homes and our bosoms. We need not ascend into heaven to seek the Author of the moral law, nor descend into the deep to learn the mystery of His being. The Word is nigh us, in our hearts and in our mouths.

Conscience an argument for God in our homes and bosoms.

If this reasoning be just, we perceive that all moral philosophy must find its ultimate ground in God. The distinctions of moral good and evil are a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery, if there is no God. The entire system of social order, the fabric of government, the criminal jurisprudence of states becomes unmeaning, or is reduced to a mere system of prudential and precautionary measures to prevent physical hurt. Take away God, and, considered in his ethical constitution, man becomes the sport and the scandal of the universe. He is an enormous lie, and those very elements of his being in which he exults that he is superior to the brutes,—those grand conceptions of the true, the good, the just—are mere chimeras, which foster a pride that in the eyes of those who know his real condition makes him ridiculous, and cheats him of pleasures that he might enjoy, by empty phantoms. But if the law of causation in the world of speculation and the law of duty in the moral world are true and faithful witnesses—and these are the principles which guarantee the argument in their respective spheres—then as certainly as man has a reasonable soul, so certainly there is a God. He cannot explain himself without God. He perceives as clearly as the light of the sun that either he himself is a mere bundle of contradictions, or he was made in the image of a supreme Creator, who is holy and wise and good. Speculative reason might perplex itself about the first substance, but when conscience speaks

God the ground of all moral distinctions, and the soul of every social and political institution.

the personality of God is as plain as the law of duty. He is felt to be no primordial necessity, no self-developing life of nature, no soul of the world; but He is Jehovah, distinct from all and yet pervading all—the everlasting God who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast.

The testimony of man's highest form of life.

III. There is still a higher form of life than that of intelligence or duty. There is a state of the soul which calls out every spiritual energy in delighted and unimpeded exercise. It transfers to the elements of intelligence and obligation an element borrowed from the heart. It is the element of love—an element involving not only the cognition of the true, the just, the right, but the cognition of the beautiful and glorious. Rectitude is no longer apprehended as a duty, and clothed in the cold garb of authority; it comes to us in the freshness and sweetness of life, and we delight in it as the highest and purest energy of the soul.[1] This new form of life is religion. To know that there is a God is not to be religious; to know that virtue is our law is not to be religious; even to practise from the sense of obligation is not to be religious. You must contemplate God under the forms of beauty—the beauty of holiness—and imitate His life of spontaneous and blessed rectitude before you become truly religious. Hence, in religion every department of our nature is called into play, and called into play under the law of love, or worship, or adoration. Now when our nature reaches this stage, the knowledge of God as existing becomes a fixed element of our consciousness. We have the witness in ourselves. But this stage is never perfectly reached in this life, and nowhere reached at all, except among those who are illuminated by the grace of the gospel. But in all men there exist traces

The principle of worship universal in man.

[1] [The religious nature manifests the identity of the object of its worship with the God revealed in conscience, through the medium of the notion of rectitude, which is the measure of holiness objectively considered. The moral ruler of conscience is the God of beauty and glory of the heart.]

of the principle of worship—there exist sentiments of pious veneration which show what man's nature normally is, and which serve to complete the argument from the human soul for the being of God. Men everywhere must worship. They feel that their being is not complete without an object of worship. Hence the schemes of superstition, of idolatry; hence the temples, the altars, the sacrifices which exist among all people. Hence, too, the systems of Divination, of Sorcery, of Magic. There is a tie which binds man to the spiritual world. He craves communion with it and resorts to vain efforts to penetrate its mysteries. As the religious principle exists in the form of a blind craving where it has any development in the life, we can conclude nothing from it as to the character of the being it seeks. Having lost the element of a genuine adoration, grounded in the ineffable holiness of God, it creates objects for itself that are but the reflection of the moral state of the worshipper's own soul. But the religious sentiment does certainly prove that there must be an object corresponding to it. If it is the nature of man to worship, there must be a being to be worshipped, or that nature is again a lie. But when this law of worship is developed under the gospel, it becomes not merely the knowledge of God, but it becomes communion with God. It reveals His personality in the most convincing light, because we know that He speaks to us and we speak to Him. It reveals His glory. Here our knowledge reaches its culmination. We find the true centre and rest of our being—to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.

If man's nature is to worship, there must be a God.

I have now given you an outline of the arguments by which man fortifies his faith in the being of God. I have taken the human soul in the higher forms of its spiritual life—as rational, as moral, as religious, and I have shown that the laws, under which these departments of his being operate and act, lead necessarily to the immediate inference of a

Faith in the being of God springs out of man's nature.

God, infinite, eternal, necessary, intelligent, moral, voluntary, free—a personal Being ineffably glorious in the light of His holiness. I have pictured the normal progress of reason, or rather of the whole spiritual man, and I have shown that man finds the complement of his intelligence, his conscience and his propensity to worship only in such a living and personal Jehovah. The argument lies close to him —so close, that if he can know any thing he can know God.

In what sense the knowledge of God is innate.

You can now understand the sense in which the doctrine should be understood that the knowledge of God is innate. The theory of innate ideas in the sense of formed and developed propositions has been long since exploded. So far as any objective reality is concerned, the child is born with a mind perfectly blank. Consciousness is dormant until experience awakens it by the presentation of an object. But though destitute of formed knowledges, the mind has capacities which are governed by laws that constitute the conditions of intelligence. Under the guidance of these laws it comes to know, and whatever knowledge it obtains in obedience to them is natural. Now, as the knowledge of God necessarily emerges from the operation of these laws as soon as our faculties are sufficiently matured, that knowledge is natural —as natural as that of the material world or of the existence of our own souls. We cannot think rightly without thinking God. In the laws of intelligence, of duty and of worship He has given us the guides to His own sanctuary, and if we fail to know Him, it is because we have first failed to know ourselves. This is the conclusion to which we are legitimately conducted.

No God-consciousness, and our knowledge of God mediate and representative.

This view of the subject dispenses with the necessity of postulating a presentative knowledge of God, through a faculty of apprehension adapted to the cognition of the Divine Being, as perception is adapted to the cognition of external objects. God is not given to us as a phenomenon of experience. There is no God-consciousness apart

from the necessary inferences of reason. All our knowledge of Him is mediate and representative. He is what intelligence finds in the inquiries which it raises upon the phenomena of experience. But the fact that philosophers have resorted to such theories as those of the intuitional theology is a proof of how closely the conviction of a God lies to our nature. Men have felt, with irresistible certainty, that He exists. The fact being indisputable, when they have been driven by sophistical objections from one method of certifying it, they have immediately resorted to another. When they have been unable to vindicate it as an inference, they have resolved it into immediate perception; when they could not ground it in discursive reason, they have grounded it in faith, and made faith a faculty instead of a mental function. The import of all is, that the notion of God cannot be expelled from the human soul. He is, and our nature proclaims that He is, however we may explain the manner of the fact.

The conviction of God lies close to our nature.

LECTURE III.

MAN'S NATURAL IGNORANCE OF GOD.

WE have seen that the human mind has been constituted with a special reference to the knowledge of God. It was made to know Him. It contains elements of faith, or laws of intelligence, which, when normally applied to the phenomena of experience, necessitate the inference that there is a God, and, apart from all disturbing influences, would conduct to a just apprehension and a true worship of His name. The very principles by which man is capable of knowing any thing have their proper termination in God. Indeed, he cannot justly be said to know at all without the recognition of the First Cause. This knowledge, we have seen, is not a remote deduction, but an immediate inference. The finite and contingent give the infinite and eternal upon the same principle on which thought gives existence. The argument, The world exists, therefore God is, is of the same kind with the celebrated enthymeme of Des Cartes: *Cogito ergo sum*. But while the grounds of the knowledge of God are thus laid in the very structure of the mind, while its primitive and indestructible faiths find their natural termination in Him, it is yet matter of experience that no one has ever, in point of fact, attained to right and worthy conceptions of the nature and character of God by the unassisted light of reason. The world by wisdom knew not God. Here, then, is a singular phenomenon. Reason, under sound and healthful culture, must, from its very laws, reflect the image

Man made for the knowledge of God,

yet does not attain to it.

of God. Matured by a normal growth, it could not fail to find in Him the source of knowledge as well as the fountain of being. Man has implicitly, therefore, what he never realizes explicitly—a germ which never expands and matures—a seed which never springs up into a vigorous plant nor bears healthful fruit. This is the positive testimony of Scripture, as well as the dictate of observation and experience: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."[1]

A singular anomaly.

The question now arises, How is this singular anomaly to be explained? How is it that while all may know, and ought to know, none in fact do know? To answer this question is the design of the present lecture.

But let us settle, in the first place, precisely the nature of that ignorance with which we have to deal. If it were absolute and entire, if the reigning doctrine of the human race were the hypothesis of Atheism, it would be impossible to vindicate Theism upon any grounds of reason. Were there no sense of God and no sense of religion, it would be as idle to speculate upon theology, as to speculate upon morals where no sense of obligation and of rectitude obtains. The argument of our last lecture shows conclusively that a vague sentiment of religion, of dependence, responsibility and worship, and a corresponding conviction of the existence and moral government of a supreme intelligence, are coextensive

[1] Rom. i. 19–24.

with the race. What we affirm is, that while the existence of God and a general sense of our relations to Him are so grounded in the soul as to make man, wherever he is found, a religious creature, no just and consistent notions of His nature, His character and His attributes are anywhere compassed by natural light; and that wherever apprehended at all, He is apprehended in no such light as to generate the dispositions and emotions which constitute true piety. In other words, apart from revelation, He is nowhere rightly represented in thought, and even with revelation He is nowhere truly loved and worshipped without special grace. The speculative knowledge of the heathen is not only defective, but grossly erroneous; and spiritual cognition is the product of the Holy Ghost alone by the Gospel. That this is the truth, the religious history of mankind abundantly demonstrates. What Paul wrote centuries ago has always been true of those who are destitute of the light of revelation—there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Amid all the temples and altars and sacrifices and costly oblations which figure in heathen and superstitious worship, there is nowhere an offering to the true, except as to the unknown God. Throughout the earth there is not a heart which beats in love at the mention of His name or is touched with a sentiment of pure devotion to His service, except where the Word and the Spirit of Christ have taken their lodgment. The whole world lieth in wickedness. How shall we explain this mournful phenomenon?

A more precise statement of man's natural ignorance of God.

Explanation demanded.

I. It is clear that this state of things is most unnatural in the strict and proper sense of the term; that is, it contradicts the ideal of humanity. It is equally clear that a force originally foreign must have entered as a disturbing element into the development of reason, and turned it aside from the line of its right direction. There must be a steady and permanent cause, where the effects are so uniform and constant.

A foreign disturbing element; twofold.

We are justified by Scripture, and warranted by observation and analogy, in asserting that this foreign, disturbing force is twofold: the power of sin as a principle of evil within us, a law of death continually counter-working the law of the Spirit of life; and the power of Satan, the evil one himself, whose influence upon the human race has only been increased by the success of his first experiment. These two powers, in their joint operation, are sufficient to explain the astonishing anomalies of the religious history of the species. To these two causes, the depravity of man and the malignity of Satan, we owe it, that while there is a general, if not an universal, conviction of the existence of a Supreme Being, when men undertake to frame a just and consistent conception of His character, relations and works they pass through every conceivable shade of error, from the disgusting grossness of Fetichism to the deceitful refinements of Pantheism. The God they represent in thought is often a monster, sometimes a beast, but never the living and true Jehovah. Let us advert in the first place to the power of Satan.

The kind and extent of Satan's power in and over men.

1. Since the fall this malignant spirit has entered into human nature in a manner somewhat analogous to that in which the Spirit of God dwells in the hearts of believers. He has an intimate access to our faculties, and though he cannot, like the Holy Ghost, work at their roots so as to change and transform their tendencies, he can yet ply them with representations and delusions which shall effectually incline them to will and to do according to his pleasure. He can cheat the understanding with appearances of truth, fascinate the fancy with pictures of beauty, and mock the heart with semblances of good. By a whisper, a touch, a secret suggestion, he can give an impulse to our thoughts and turn them into channels which shall exactly subserve the purposes of his malice. In all this he does no violence to the laws of our nature. He insinuates himself into our faculties, and works by them and through them according to their own constitution. He disturbs neither the spontaneity

of the understanding nor the freedom of the will. As the work of the Holy Ghost in the saints is by no means inconsistent with their full responsibility and their entire moral agency, so the work of the devil in the reprobate makes it none the less their work, and leaves these dupes of his malignity and craft without excuse for their sin. Unlike the Holy Ghost, he has no creative power. He can impart no new nature. He can only avail himself of what already exists to his hand. His power, like that of every other finite being, consists in obedience to the laws of the subject upon which he operates. Its secret lies in his knowledge and his skill. In our fallen condition he has no need to change our nature; it is already adapted to his purposes. It is a fit instrument for executing his fell designs against the kingdom and the glory of God upon earth. These representations of the indwelling of Satan in the human soul, and of his consequent power and influence for evil, are the uniform teachings of Scripture. He is there described as the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; the god of this world, who blinds the minds and hardens the heart of the impenitent and reprobate and seals them up in final unbelief; the strong man armed, who holds undisturbed possession of the palace of the human soul, until a stronger than he invades and casts him out. Men, on the other hand, are represented as his servants, his children, his captives, his dupes, and the obedient subjects of his will. His dwelling in them as a spiritual fact was authenticated beyond the possibility of doubt by its extraordinary manifestations in the case of the demoniacs of the New Testament. To all this must be added that, in that pregnant passage which spans the history of time, the contest betwixt light and darkness—betwixt the children of God and the impenitent—is described as a contest betwixt two opposing armies, the heads and leaders of which are the Seed of the woman and the Serpent. This passage teaches us, too, that the kingdom of darkness is not a series of occasional insurrec-

tions, but an organized conspiracy of evil. Its deeds of wickedness are not sudden, spasmodic, extemporaneous effusions of desperate and impotent malice; they are parts of a plan, a great, comprehensive scheme, conceived by a master mind and adjusted with exquisite skill, for extinguishing the glory of God. The consolidated empire for so many centuries of Paganism, the persecuting edicts of imperial Rome, the rise and brilliant success of Mohammedanism, the corruptions of the Papacy, and the widespread desolations of modern infidelity, can never be adequately understood without contemplating them as parts of an organized system of evil, of which the gigantic intellect of the devil is the author, while men have been the guilty and unwitting instruments. They have answered his ends and played obsequiously into his hands, while they vainly supposed that they were accomplishing purposes of their own. He has, in his sphere, a providence in imitation of that of God, and to this providence his children and subjects are adroitly moulded. They take their place and act their part under his superintending eye.

An organized system of evil in the world.

The ultimate design of Satan in all his machinations is to insult the majesty of God. A liar from the beginning, his first lie was a blasphemy, and every other has been like unto it. His great aim, in reference to man, is to transfuse into the human soul his own views of the Divine character, works and government. His ready access to our faculties, his intimate union with us by virtue of our native depravity, his familiar acquaintance with the laws of our being, his long experience and his angelic skill, render it easy for him to insinuate his own thoughts and impart his own spirit to the minds of those whom grace has not rescued from his hands. Where he cannot destroy he perverts and corrupts. As he cannot extinguish reason, and therefore cannot utterly efface the general sense of a superior power, he exerts his ingenuity to distort all the elements of reason,

The design of Satan as to God, and as to man.

understanding, conscience and religion into vehicles of slanderous impressions of God. As we must have a God and a religion, he will take care that the God whom we acknowledge shall be unworthy of respect, and the religion which we profess a disgrace to our nature. With such a teacher, and with such hearts as ours have been rendered by the fall, it is no wonder that men have everywhere come short of the glory of God and changed it into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.

Nothing incredible in all this.

It is a fearful truth that our nature is in such intimate alliance with the Devil. But there is nothing incredible in it. If there be a spiritual world and we are spiritual beings, that world must touch us in some points. God's works are not disjointed and isolated. All is dependent upon each, and each is dependent upon all. The eternal throne is the only independent thing in the universe. That spirit can be present to spirit is manifest from the daily intercourse of life, from the power of friendship, and especially from the ties of the family. That spirit can enter into actual union with spirit is apparent from the fundamental facts of redemption. Christ is in us and we in Him, and God in both. Believers, too, are one with each other. The union of Satan with the world is not the same in kind with the union of Christ and His people; it is only analogous to it. He is not our sin in the full sense that Christ is our life. He has no creative power, but he is our tempter, our seducer, an ever-present prompter of evil to our thoughts and hearts, an ever-present sophist to disarm truth of its point and to commend falsehood to our embrace. To say that all this is mysterious is to say nothing to the point. The soul is a mystery, thought itself is a mystery, all knowledge begins and ends in mystery. The moral history of man, whether with respect to the fall or redemption, loses itself in clouds of mystery which no understanding can penetrate but the infinite understanding of God. It is for

us to accept the facts, however their explanations transcend our faculties.

2. While, however, man's ignorance of God is to be largely attributed to the craft and sophistry of the Devil, we are not to forget the human side of the phenomenon, and construe ourselves into innocent victims and dupes. We have already said that Satan does no violence to the liberty or faculties of man. He avails himself of the constitution of our own nature, and especially of our depravity as fallen beings. He gives an impetus and direction to our own spontaneous tendencies. His power is purely moral. Apart from our corruption he can only annoy; he cannot deceive. To understand, therefore, the immediate cause of man's misrepresentations of God, we must consider the power of depravity as a law of abnormal development in the soul. As a pervading state it has a necessary tendency to distort the faculties from their legitimate bent and expression. It is to the mind what disease is to the body. Holiness, on the other hand, is health, and communion with God, life and power. We might as reasonably expect that the secretions of the animal system should go on comfortably and smoothly amidst the heat and agony of a fever, as expect sound conclusions in relation to Divine subjects from a reason to which God is not present as the Father of lights. Sin is as really blindness to the mind as it is hardness to the heart, and the soul under the dominion of sin must be turned aside from the normal evolution of its real and original tendencies. Its activities, however intense and vigorous, must be set in the wrong direction. It is a great error to imagine that depravity confines its mischief to the heart, or to those faculties which are immediately conversant about the distinctions of right and wrong. Its seat is the soul, and not any single department of our spiritual nature, and as disease extends its influence to all the functions of the body, so sin extends to all the powers and faculties of our being. In sin, therefore,

Sin, a disease in the soul.

It extends to all our powers.

as the disturbance of the normal exercise of our faculties, as distorting and perverting our energies, as a law of abnormal development, we see a cause that is adequate to explain the phenomenon in question. But this general view is not sufficient to content our thoughts. We look abroad upon the world, and as we contemplate the manifold forms of religious error, the various superstitions, the disgusting rites of worship, the monstrous and hideous symbols of the Godhead, and the cruel penances and gross immoralities which prevail in heathen lands—when we consider all the abominations which have long passed and still pass under the sacred name of worship—we wish to see how these errors have been engendered, and how they have been propagated and spread. It does not satisfy us to trace them to sin in the general. That does not explain how these errors rather than others have arisen. We want to know the causes which have set the human mind in these particular directions. We desire to see the forms which sin has assumed in producing these disastrous effects. The general notion of depravity already contains in it the notion that man must be ignorant of God, but there must be special influences of depravity to account for the enormous lies which have taken the name of truth, and the awful blasphemies which have taken the name of worship.

A more particular statement needful.

We do not pretend to be able to indicate the immediate origin of all the errors that prevail. That would require an amount of learning, an amount of philosophy and an amount of historical detail altogether unsuited, even if we possessed them, to lectures like these. Our task is humbler and more limited. We propose to illustrate how depravity enters as a disturbing and perverting element into the sphere of speculation, and gives rise to false gods; how it enters into the sphere of morality, and corrupts the first principles of duty; and how it enters into the sphere of worship, and converts the temple of God into the abode of monsters. Man never

Threefold sphere of depravity.

degrades God until he has first degraded himself, and the degradation of God keeps pace with the degradation of himself. He must become unnatural before he can have an unnatural religion.

Its influence on the speculative knowledge of God through the reason.

(1.) Let us examine, first, the influence of depravity upon the speculative knowledge of God. This is the kind of knowledge contemplated in a system of sound philosophy or metaphysics. It is the knowledge which results from the application of the law of causation to the phenomena of experience. This species of knowledge, one would think, being so accessible, lying so near to our faculties, ought to be sound and true; and yet it is always erroneous, defective and debasing when not corrected by Divine revelation. Now, in this sphere, sin first appears in the form of vain speculations. Those speculations are vain which relate to questions that transcend the scope of our faculties—which undertake to comprehend the incomprehensible and to carry knowledge beyond its first principles. The creature, as dependent and finite, can never hope to compass an absolute knowledge of any thing. Intelligence begins with principles that must be accepted and not explained; and in applying these principles to the phenomena of experience, apparent contradictions constantly emerge that require patience and further knowledge to resolve them. But the mind, anxious to know all and restless under doubt and uncertainty, is tempted to renounce the first principles of reason and to contradict the facts which it daily observes. It seeks consistency of thought, and rather than any gaps shall be left unfilled, it plunges every thing into hopeless confusion. Instead of accepting the laws of intelligence, and patiently following the light of reason, and submitting to ignorance where ignorance is the lot of his nature, as limited and finite, and joyfully receiving the partial knowledge which is his earthly inheritance, man, under the impulse of curiosity, had rather make a world that he does understand than admit one which he cannot comprehend.

Vanity of mind.

When he cannot stretch himself to the infinite dimensions of truth, he contracts truth to his own little measure. This is what the Apostle means by *vanity of mind*. To illustrate it by an example: Reason asks, and asks very properly, Whence came the world? The law of causation, an original and therefore an incomprehensible faith—a principle to be accepted, not proved—answers that it was created. Curiosity asks: How is it possible that a thing can be created out of nothing? and because it cannot comprehend the mystery of the commencement of being, it fancies a contradiction in the notion of creation, and then denies the original principle of faith, which positively affirms that God is a Creator. It must know all, or it will know nothing. Apparent contradictions, accepted as real, force it upon hypotheses which the primitive data of intelligence do not justify, and which, therefore, must be false.

Example.

So with the immortality of the soul. It is an elementary principle of reason, a spontaneous and necessary faith of the human race. But instead of accepting it as a fact as certain as our consciousness, and waiting for further light to solve the mysteries which compass it, vain speculation undertakes to reconcile it with the double fact of the unity of man as compounded of soul and body, and the dissolution of the body; and because it fails to make thought consistent with itself, denies what its own nature intuitively affirms. It pronounces immortality to be impossible, because the identity of man depends upon the coexistence of soul and body, and the body unquestionably perishes. The problem in all speculation is harmony of view; thought must be consistent with itself. Aiming at this ideal, a creature of imperfect knowledge must often be tempted to deny the plainest truths, because it cannot see how they are to be made to correspond with other truths which are equally indisputable. Difficulties appear as contradictions, and as the mind cannot think at all but in obedience to the laws of identity and contradiction, these difficulties must lead it into serious and fatal error.

Another example.

But were the reason sound and healthful, it would perceive at once that there could be no contradiction in the case—that things equally proved to be true must be harmonious; and it would instantly resolve all further perplexity into its ignorance, and wait patiently for more light. In this impatience to compass consistency of thought, and in this confusion as to the boundaries of faith and speculation, there is proof of the disturbing power of sin. It is depravity which so perverts the soul as to make it violate the laws of its own constitution and the essential conditions of knowledge. In its normal state it would see at once that none of its original beliefs could be questioned, and that any speculation which leads to such a result must be suicidal. This vanity of mind is a fruitful source of error in relation to God. It may not only deny Him as Creator, but it may deny the very law upon which His existence, as a first cause, is demonstrated. It may find contradictions in the law, if extended beyond the world of phenomena, and conclude that there is no bridge between the visible and the invisible. It may find in finite and contingent being the grounds of its own phenomena, and thus preclude the necessity of going beyond the world for the solution of its mysteries. For examples of this vanity we need not go back to the ancient philosophers. We have them in our own age and at our own doors. The very same method of speculation which in ancient times made matter eternal and reduced God to the level of the finite and conditioned, has, in modern times, denied with equal confidence the possibility of creation, and reduced God to a substance without attributes or a being without determinations. He has been degraded to a level with nothing, or treated as merely the infinite possibility of things.

This vanity of mind, proof of the disturbing power of sin, and the fruitful source of error in relation to God,

in our own age as well as of old.

The root of this vanity is most certainly pride. Man is unwilling to acknowledge his condition as one of only partial knowledge. He is

The root of it is pride.

hence reluctant to comply with the terms upon which alone any solid knowledge is attainable. In the effort to be omniscient he trangresses the laws of thought, and the consequence of intellectual transgression is no less fatal in the sphere of speculation than of moral transgression in the sphere of duty. He is struck with blindness, his foolish heart is darkened.

Effects of pride upon philosophy in the past.

It is this same pride which kept the world for so many centuries ignorant of the true method of philosophy. That method is only a statement of the form and limits of our knowledge, and as long as man was not content to restrict himself within those limits; as long as he aspired to compass in his thought the essential nature and properties of being and the whole system of the universe, he was left to blunder as a fit retribution for his presumption. It was not weakness, it was pride, that seduced him from the way of truth. Pride, in the sense of self-independence and self-sufficiency, is the very core of sin, and it was but a development of its real spirit and temper when man undertook to make his own understanding the absolute measure of truth. We are apt to represent the aberrations of philosophy as springing from infirmity, from the want of proper guides or suitable helps, like the mistakes of a child in its first efforts to walk. But this is an error; the law of truth is in man's reason, and if he errs it is because he presumptuously overlooks, denies or despises it. He has the guide, but will not follow it. His vain speculations are in defiance of, and not in obedience to, the intellectual laws of his own constitution, and his errors are at once sins and judgments.

We have seen how vanity of mind superinduces a denial of the primitive cognitions of reason, and plunges speculation into regions inaccessible to our faculties, or sets man on efforts to attain a species of knowledge which is not adapted to his nature. To this may be added the proneness to accept crotchets for principles, and analogies for inductions, upon slight and accidental grounds—grounds of superficial plaus-

Crotchets for principles.

ibility or apparent competency to explain a given class of phenomena. These false maxims, once admitted, work mischief in the whole extent of their application. If accepted as universal truths, they must convert philosophy into a vast collection of delusions. Take, for example, the crotchet that in all knowledge there must be a resemblance between the immediate object and the mind—that the soul can cognize only through something analogous to itself—and you have at once the foundation of an absolute system of idealism. You deny the possibility of an immediate perception of matter—an immediate knowledge of any things but our own thoughts—and the step is easy from the denial of the knowledge of the external world to the denial of its existence, and then the progress is natural to universal skepticism.

Influence of sin upon speculation through the imagination.

Another element which must be taken into the account in estimating the tendency of sin to pervert speculation is the irregular influence of imagination. Our English translators seem to have regarded Paul as particularly signalizing this faculty as the seat of vanity; "*they became vain in their imaginations.*" Butler styles it a "forward delusive faculty." Its true office is to be a handmaid to the understanding, vivifying its conceptions and imparting a glow of life and beauty to the knowledge of nature. It is the medium through which our emotions are excited in the absence of their appropriate objects. By imagination we mean not simply the power of vividly representing to the mind the objects of its past perceptions or of its present thoughts, but that combination with other faculties by virtue of which new forms and new objects are created. It is by virtue of this faculty, in this sense, that theories in science are constructed from remote analogies—that accidents give intensity to the conception of particular objects, and make them the centre of associations which exist only in the heated mind. Taken in this sense, we may say with Hume,[1] that "nothing is

The true office of this faculty.

[1] Treat. Human Nat. b. i., p. iv., § 7.

more dangerous to reason than the flights of imagination, and nothing has been the occasion of more mistakes among philosophers. Men of bright fancies may, in this respect, be compared to those angels whom the Scriptures represent as covering their eyes with their wings." The influence of imagination in perverting speculation appears in the tendency to frame an hypothesis from slight and accidental coincidences. The imagination represents the connected things so vividly that we are tempted to cognize the connection as a necessary part of themselves. Hence the substitution of fancied for real causes; hence superstition substituted in the place of philosophy; hence arise the arts of magic and the belief of prodigies and signs. We can see how, through the irregular influence of the imagination, objects that have become strongly associated with our joys and sorrows may be invested with attributes that do not belong to them; as, for example, the vegetable, the mineral, the beast, that from some accidental circumstance has been the occasion of imparting to us a valued good or delivering us from a dreaded evil. The object henceforward becomes the centre in our minds of a whole class of associations waked up by the vividness of our emotions. We insensibly attribute to it intelligence and design, and end by making it a god. The imagination takes the place of reason, and attributes to the fancied cause all the properties and attributes of the real Author of our blessings. In the same way natural objects become centres of thoughts awakened by disgust, and end in being made the personal objects of hatred and contempt. The causes which first set the fancy to work in particular directions it is impossible to specify. Here Satan has a commanding field of operation. But the fancy once set to work we can readily perceive how the facts of experience and the phenomena of nature can be completely transformed. We have the key to the polytheism which has prevailed in all heathen lands. We know the forge in which its innumerable gods have been

Delineation of its influence when perverted.

Key to polytheism.

made. We know the author of their various attributes and works. Now, here is a pregnant proof of the disturbing power of sin. A faculty which God intended to be a handmaid and minister is made the guide of our nature. Reason takes the place of a subordinate, and man creates by the same process both worlds and gods for himself. Here, too, we see the same principle of pride—the exaltation of his own being. He makes and unmakes; he becomes creator and Lord; he becomes the supreme God of all.

Combine now these two causes, a perverted reason and a perverted imagination; replace the laws of belief by groundless crotchets, and picture the world in the colours of fancy; let false principles and a lively imagination unite their resources, and let the end be consistency of thought in a scheme of the universe; and we have a key to human delusions in the sphere of speculation. We can see the door through which sin introduces the prolific progeny of error, superstition, witchcraft, sorcery, idolatry and even atheism itself.

The perverting influence of sin in the sphere of morals,

(2.) But we proceed to signalize another form in which sin still more fearfully perverts the nature and character of God. It is through the influence of an evil conscience. We do not propose to consider the manner in which depravity distorts our moral judgments themselves, often leading us in speculation to question the first principles of right or to resolve them into modifications of pleasure and pain. We do not allude to its power in misleading its victims in the estimate of their own character, or in blinding the mind to the atrocity of particular instances of wickedness. The point we have in view is to illustrate the tendency of a perverted conscience to misrepresent the nature and character of God.

especially in relation to the character of God.

McCosh[1] has strikingly illustrated what he calls "an attracting and repelling principle" in the religious life of our fallen race. "First, there is a feeling in man," says he, "prompt-

[1] Divine Government, p. 44.

ing him to seek God, if haply he may find him. Transient feelings of gratitude, the fear of danger, the keen sense of sin, the fear of punishment, all these would draw or drive him into the presence of God." After enumerating the circumstances under which this feeling conspicuously operates, he proceeds to mention that "there is also a repelling principle, and it is the latter which is so very mysterious. It is a fact—and the explanation is to be found in an evil conscience—that there is something in human nature which would drive man away from his Maker. When his better feelings would prompt him to fall down before God, a hand from behind is felt to be holding him back, and he hesitates and procrastinates till the time for action is over." To the action and reaction of these opposite principles he traces the "strange contradictions of the human soul" in relation to religion. "It is drawn to God, and yet it is repelled from God when it comes near him, as the electrified ball is repelled as soon as it comes in contact with the object which attracted it. Man is constrained to acknowledge God, and constrained to tremble before the God whom he acknowledges. He would escape from God only to feel that he is chained to him by bonds which he cannot break. He would flee from God, but feels himself helpless as the charmed bird with the eye of the serpent fixed upon it. He would go forth like Cain from the presence of the Lord, but he has God's mark upon him, and is still under his eye in all his wanderings. He would flee from the presence of God, like the rebellious prophet, into a region of thought and feeling where the remembrance of God can never trouble him, but it is only to find himself brought back by restraints laid upon him. In his conduct toward his God there is prostration and yet rebellion; there is assurance and yet there is terror. When he refuses to worship God, it is from mingled pride and alarm; when he worships God, it is from the same feelings; and the worship which he spontaneously pays is a strange mixture of presumption and slavish fear. Hence, the vibrat-

Contradictions in the human soul.

ing movements of the world's religious history. Under this double influence, attractive and repulsive, man's eccentric orbit is not so much like that of the planets, with their equable motion and temperature, as like that of the comets, now approaching, as it were, within the scorching beams of the central heat and light, and again driven away into the utmost and coldest regions of space, and seeming as if they were let loose from all central and restraining influence."

To appreciate the result produced by the joint operation of these two principles, so happily signalized by McCosh, it must be borne in mind that the attraction is without love, and the repulsion without reverence. The sympathies which draw men to God do not spring from any sense of the Divine excellence or any apprehension of the Divine glory. There is nothing approximating to a spirit of fellowship. Their needs and their burdens, their weaknesses and dangers, or the transient play of emotions upon sudden occasions of benefits received or ills averted,—these are the cords which attract us to our Maker. In the effort to escape from God guilt is the predominant controlling motive. We fear and tremble, but we are not awed into any just reverence for His majesty, or any just conception of the sanctity of His justice. We hate while we tremble.

Fearing, yet hating,

When now we call to mind that a man seeks harmony in his conscience as well as in his speculations—that he is as anxious to be at peace with himself in the reflections which he makes upon his own life and character as to be sensible of mutual consistency and coherence in his philosophical inquiries—we can easily perceive that an evil conscience must be a perpetual source of false representations of God. When guilt rankles in the breast, the man blasphemes the justice of his Judge. His self-love will prompt him to stigmatize the punishment of himself as remorseless cruelty; and taking the hue of his own feelings, he will clothe God in colours of blood. He will become a monster who must be avoided or appeased.

an evil conscience must misrepresent God.

Hence those savage religions which startle as much by the ferocity of their rites as by the enormous blasphemy of their doctrines. Or, when the rites of propitiation are less revolting, they still lead to a degradation of God by figuring Him as a being who can be bribed, wheedled or cajoled. A guilty conscience, unwilling to relinquish its iniquities and yet anxious to be delivered from apprehensions of punishment, prompts a man to represent the Deity as subject to the weaknesses and follies of humanity. The whole system of worship is projected upon the principle of ministering to the vanity of the Almighty. As His justice is regarded as personal revenge, the satisfaction of that justice consists in soothing His wounded pride. God is to be flattered and caressed with external marks of submission and esteem; He is to be flattered or insulted accordingly as He conducts Himself well or ill to the worshipper. The real spirit of idolatrous worship, as a spirit of bribery, flattery and deceit, is seen in the manner in which the heathen were accustomed to treat their gods when they refused to succour them in times of distress. Thucydides tells us that during the prevalence of the plague in Athens the temples and images and altars were entirely deserted and religion treated with contempt, because their prayers had not been successful in staying the progress of the pestilence. "The ancient Egyptians," says McCosh, "in times of severe national distress, took their sacred animals to a secret place and put them to death, and threatened their gods that if the calamity did not pass away they would disclose the mysteries of Isis or expose the members of Osiris to Typhon. Augustus revenged himself for the loss of his fleet by storms on two several occasions, by forbidding the statue of Neptune to be carried in the procession of the gods." Conscience fills the mind with prejudices against the nature and character of God, as a personal insult to ourselves fills our hearts with prejudices against the man, however excellent in himself, who has mortified our self-respect. We cannot judge rightly of one whom we hate and one whom we fear. In this way

the guilty are betrayed into the most insulting reproaches of their Maker. The being whom their fears picture is a strange and hideous combination of malice, of weakness and of vanity. No wonder that under the united influence of guilt, self-love and the power of sin, under the united influence of an evil conscience and of evil passions, men have made to themselves a God whom it is a shame to worship. When to these causes we add the force of imagination, when we give it impetus and energy by the very intensity of the feelings, we have the key to the monsters which, under the name of deities, have accelerated that degradation of the species in which they took their origin. Here we have the true solution of superstition and will-worship, whether they appear in forms of cruelty and blood, or in the softer shapes of flattery and pretended praise. These same causes also lead to a bold denial of providence. The repulsive principle drives off all thoughts of God and the Divine government; and it is even made a proof of His dignity and blessedness that He takes no interest in the affairs of men. If He exist at all, He exists in solitary selfishness, and never permits His eternal slumbers to be broken by such petty concerns as the acts or fortunes of His creatures. He is despoiled of His providence in compliment to His majesty. The Epicurean, in his refusal to worship, illustrates, only in a different way, the same low thought of God as a victim of vanity, which the devotee of superstition carries out in his deceitful homage. Thus it comes to pass that none know God. The Apostle touches the core of the difficulty when he traces it to their invincible repugnance to give Him the glory which is His due. They refuse Him the love to which His infinite holiness is entitled. His light departs from the soul; it henceforward gropes in darkness; stumbles at the first principles of truth; enthrones imagination as the regulative measure of thought; and when roused by a guilty conscience and evil passions gives us a being whom it would be our honour to despise. The heart begins in malice, and ends

The true solution of superstition and will-worship.

by the creation of a Deity who is a fit subject for that malice.

(3.) We have now seen how conscience, in the bosom of a sinner, becomes a fruitful source of ignorance and mistake in relation to God. We have seen how it crouches and flatters—how it seeks to purchase peace by rites and sacrifices that involve any suffering but that of the crucifixion of sin. But there is a principle which prompts man to worship something as an object in which it can find complacency. It is not content with distant homage; it wants something in which it can feel that there is a mutual sympathy with itself—something which shall take the place of that communion with God which constitutes the essence of true religion.

The perverting influence of sin in the sphere of worship.

This principle of worship or of fellowship with God, under the perverting influence of sin, becomes an additional source of ignorance and error. The God whom it seeks cannot be found. The living God has retired; He has left the soul to darkness and solitude. Hence a substitute must be found, and the result is the invention of images as symbols of a presence which is no longer real. We imitate communion by the embrace of the idol. We transfer to it the sentiments of reverence which we profess for God, and by a natural delusion we impart to it a fictitious consciousness of our reverence and respect. This want of a present God, and this determination to make Him present, have no doubt exerted a wide influence in the inventions of idolatry. The reaction of the image upon the mind of the worshipper, in depressing his religious knowledge, is too obvious to require illustration. This seems to have been also the opinion of Calvin[1] as to the origin of idolatry: "That idolatry has its origin in the idea which men have that God is not present with them unless His presence is carnally exhibited, appears from the example of the Israelites. Up, said they, make us gods which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not

[1] Instit. Lib. I., c. xi., § 8.

what is become of him. (Ex. xxxii. 1.) They knew, indeed, that there was a God, whose power they had experienced in so many miracles, but they had no confidence of His being near to them, if they did not with their eyes behold a corporeal symbol of His presence as an attestation to His actual government. They desired, therefore, to be assured by the image which went before them that they were journeying under Divine guidance. And daily experience shows that the flesh is always restless, until it has obtained some figment like itself with which it may vainly solace itself as a representation of God. In consequence of this blind passion, men have, almost in all ages since the world began, set up signs on which they imagined that God was visibly depicted to their eyes." According to this view idolatry is a confession that God has departed. It is the effort of human presumption to countervail the consequences of His absence, or rather the invention of human pride to do without Him. It is literally bringing Him down to us.

These views confirmed by Paul,

The account which has now been given of the causes of man's ignorance and errors in relation to God seems to me to be precisely the same as that which Paul has given in the passage from his Epistle to the Romans, already cited. The root of the evil was the depravity of their hearts, manifested in their refusal to glorify God as God. They had no real love to His name, they saw no beauty in His holiness, and felt no sympathy with His glory. They were destitute of true religion. Instead of contemplating the Divine Being with reverence, gratitude and delight, they became vain in their reasonings—in their speculations upon his nature, his attributes and his relations to the creatures. Sin appears in the understanding as a principle of vanity, and, in leading men to deny the first principles of intelligence, makes their minds cease to be intelligent. Their unintelligent heart was darkened. Intelligence in its fundamental laws being subverted, men become a prey to their passions, their fancies, their prejudices and their fears, and pass through all the

stages of religious degradation until they make themselves as vile as the gods they have invented.

and by Solomon.

Substantially the same is the teaching of Solomon, that God hath made men upright, but they have sought out many inventions. The word translated *inventions* has special reference to the subtleties of vain speculation. It is applied (2 Chron. xxvi. 15) to "the engines invented by cunning men" introduced by Uzziah into Jerusalem, "to be on the towers and on the bulwarks to shoot arrows and great stones withal." It exactly expresses, as Hengstenberg suggests, "those so often plausible and brilliant reasonings of the natural understanding which perplex the heart and lead away from the wisdom that is from above; those speculations of a heart turned away from God, which are perpetually penetrating into the Church from the world; those profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called, against which the apostle utters his warning in 1 Tim. vi. 20." Hengstenberg very justly adds: "Since the fall, man has forgotten that he should, in the first instance, take up a receptive position in relation to the wisdom that is from above, and that such a position is the only right one; but instead of that he goes hunting after his own phantastic and high-flown thoughts. The only way of throwing off this severe disease, and of escaping from the bonds of one's own thoughts and imaginations, is to unlearn the serpent's lesson, 'Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil;' to return to our dependence on God; to renounce all self-acquired knowledge; and leaving all our own fancies and conclusions to sink in Lethe's stream, to accept the Divine teachings alone, according to our Lord's saying in Matt. xi. 25: 'I thank thee, O Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.'"[1]

If we have succeeded in exhibiting the real causes of religious error and perverseness—if we have shown that there is a disturbing power in sin which hinders and counteracts the

[1] Comment on Eccles. vii. 29.

normal development of reason, the religious condition of the world, however low and revolting, has no tendency to diminish the arguments which the light of nature affords to the being and attributes of God. That which may be known of God is clearly manifested, though men may put a veil upon their eyes and refuse to see it. They may shroud themselves in the darkness of their corruptions, but the light shines around them notwithstanding their blindness. To prove that human ignorance upon this subject is universal is only to prove that corruption is universal. The effects must be coextensive with the operation of the cause. In the sense of nature as created, all may and ought to know God; in the sense of nature as corrupted, practical atheism is our sad inheritance.

The profounder ignorance of man's heart.

II. But if man in his fallen and degenerate condition could yet compass a just speculative knowledge of God and his government, there is a profounder ignorance which would still settle upon his heart. This speculative knowledge is largely attained in countries which are distinguished by the light of the Christian revelation. The humblest peasants are familiar with truths of which Plato and Aristotle had no glimpse. They are sound upon questions which distract, perplex, torment, confound the understandings of presumptuous sophists. They know that God is an eternal, independent, personal Spirit; that He made the heavens and the earth; that He governs all creatures and all their actions; and that He is infinitely good as He is infinitely great. But, with all this knowledge, they yet fail to glorify Him as God. They want that loving light which warms as well as convinces. They want the beams of that beauty and glory which shall make them love and adore. They have no communion with Him. Sin, as the negation of the life of God in the soul of man, is a principle of blindness to all that in God which makes Him an object of delighted worship. Corrupted nature can never give birth to a single affection

Sin blinds us to the glory there is in God.

which is truly religious. Depravity seals the man against all the energies which are involved in genuine holiness. In order to this spiritual, vivifying Divine knowledge, there must be an influence from above, opening our blind eyes and touching our wayward hearts; and in order to this influence there must be redemption, atonement, reconciliation with God. The cross is the only place where men can truly find God, and the incarnate Redeemer the only being in whom a sinner can adequately know Him. Apart from the mediation of Christ there is and can be no real godliness in any portion of our fallen race. All had gone astray, and all were perishing upon the dark mountains of error.

Indirect benefits from the mere speculative knowledge of God.

Still, though the speculative knowledge of God can produce no true religion, it does always produce an amendment of public manners. It drives away superstition with its cruel and its deceitful rites; it elevates the standard of general morality; and, if it does not make man intrinsically better, it makes him externally more decent. The morality of Christian nations is far in advance of that of heathenism in its palmiest days. Crimes to which Athens and Rome attached no stigma—the unnatural lusts which were there indulged without shame—dare not confront the public opinion of any Christian state. Speculative knowledge gives a right direction to the conscience; restraining influences are multiplied, even where sanctifying grace is not felt. Read Paul's appalling description of the civilized heathen society of his day, and you will be sensible, at once, of the prodigious change which Christianity, as an external institute, has wrought in the manners of the people among whom it is received. The crimes which he mentions would be driven in Britain and America to cover themselves with the darkness of night and hide their heads in holes and corners. It is not that men are intrinsically better; they are only less wicked. It is not that their hearts are changed, but Christianity has hemmed them in with restraints. They love God no more now than in the days of Nero; but their depravity

has been turned into other channels, and moral forces are combined to repress their lusts, of which the heathen never had a notion. The Gospel, therefore, is an immense blessing, even where it does not communicate salvation. It exalts man where it does not redeem him. It sets moral powers to work which are mighty in their effects, even though they fail to reach the seat of the disease.

The Gospel exalts where it may not redeem.

III. A question now remains which in a mawkish and skeptical age deserves to be thoroughly understood—the question concerning the moral estimate which should be put upon the errors and superstitions of those who are destitute of the light of revelation. There are many who represent heathenism as a misfortune and not a crime, and exhibit its victims as objects of pity and not of indignation. Men have gone so far as to maintain that the primitive condition of man was one of rudeness and ignorance, and that the various superstitions of the world have been successive steps in the progressive education of the race. The abominations of idolatry are the innocent mistakes of childhood. It has been further alleged that they are sincere in their worship, and as they honestly aim to pay homage to His name, God will graciously accept the will for the deed. These and all similar apologies are guilty of a fundamental error. They mistake the real secret of man's ignorance of God. So far are the heathen from feeling after Him with any real desire to find Him in His true character, that the grand purpose of their inventions is to insult and degrade Him, and to reign supreme in His place. Looked at in its true light, heathenism is a crime, or rather a combination of crimes, so enormous and aggravated that the marvel is how a God of infinite justice and purity could endure it for a single day. Its mother is sin and its daughter is death. In judging of it, men imperceptibly lose sight of the fact that the heathen are men like themselves, rational, moral, religious; that they have a nature in all respects like ours—the same primitive

Heathenism: a misfortune or a crime?

cognitions, the same laws of belief, the same conscience in its fundamental commands, and the same instinct for personal communion and worship. Their constitution, as spiritual, responsible beings, in no respect differs from our own. Taking this thought along with us, we must of course judge of their principles, their character and conduct as the principles, character and conduct of rational beings. To the bar of reason they are certainly responsible. Now our whole argument has shown that these reasonable beings, in close conspiracy with the devil, have systematically corrupted and perverted their reason. They have suppressed its utterances whenever it speaks to them of God. They have listened to it in the affairs of life, but when it points to the Invisible and Supreme, they have boldly said to it that it lied, and that they would follow another light. Is there nothing monstrous in this? Heathenism is really an attempt to put out the eye of the soul—nay more, to extinguish the very being of the soul; for its essence is intelligence, and intelligence is suppressed in these very contradictions to first truths implied in heathenism. Then, again, rational beings are bound to regulate their faith by the laws of evidence. They are not to believe without just proof. They must give a reason for the faith that is in them. Bring heathenism to this test, and what are its proofs of its countless rabble of gods? What evidence can it adduce for the Divine appointment of its monstrous systems of worship? If the question were asked, Who hath required this at your hands? what rational answer could these reasonable beings give? These systems are so manifestly the products of their imagination, the spawn of a whorish fancy by a corrupt heart, that they would, perhaps, be amazed that any evidence were exacted. Then what shall we say to the crimes which their religion has sanctified? Those brutal lusts; those bacchanalian revels; the open contempt of all the ties which bind man to his fellows; homicide, fratricide, parricide; what shall we say of these,

A systematic perversion of reason.

The crimes which it sanctifies.

and of the men who have made it a merit, an act of devotion to God, to be stained with these enormities? Their consciences judge right in the ordinary relations of life; they know the obligations of truth, justice and benevolence. How can they be justified in extinguishing this conscience, this voice of God within them, when they touch the subject of religion? If they are responsible at all, surely they are responsible for crimes like these. Nothing can excuse them which does not remove them from the rank of moral beings.

Add to this that in the matter of worship they offer flattery for praise, bribes for penitence, and wages for sin. They have no love to God, no spiritual communion with their Maker, though their nature tells them this is the very life and soul of worship. Instead of this holy and spiritual exercise they substitute the presence of stocks and stones, of birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things, and would palm off this mummery to an image as an adequate compensation for the absence of holy love.

If anything can be said with truth, it is that heathenism is unnatural and monstrous. And how can it be maintained that a man is innocent when he has done violence to all that is great and noble about him? What is heathenism in its last analysis but a determined effort in the alliance and interests of hell to extinguish reason rather than admit the true God? As to the notion that idolaters are sincere in their worship, if it means that they believe their lies, that is the very core of the charge against them. How can they as reasonable beings believe without guilt a mass of stupendous falsehoods which outrage common sense? Their reason never brought them to this pass; it was something which silenced reason. If by "sincerity" is meant that they design the honour of God, then the core of their guilt again is that they have such thoughts of God as to suppose that He can be pleased with what would degrade a man. He who thinks to honour me by slander and insult, by making me approve and reward the most abominable crimes,

The plea of their being "sincere."

has certainly strange notions of honour; and the more sincerely they honour God after this fashion the more they deserve to be damned for hushing that monitor of God which speaks spontaneously in their consciences.

It is a shame to apologize for idolaters. We may pity them, but we must condemn them. They are without excuse. Their ignorance is wilful and obstinate.

Heathenism is the consummation of depravity.

The true view of heathenism is, that it is the consummation of human depravity. It is the full development of the principle of sin in its workings upon the intellectual, the moral, the religious nature of man. It is a development directly counter to that which is normal and right. It is the last stage which the mind reaches in its retrograde movement. It is as complete an unmaking of the work of God in man as it is possible to conceive. The only sense in which it is a preparation for the gospel is that it shows the hopelessness of man without it. God has permitted it to take place on a large scale that He might demonstrate the real tendencies of sin. If the fact were not before our eyes, we might be tempted to doubt whether reasonable beings could sink so low. If we knew nothing of history, and for the first time were made acquainted with the various schemes of idolatry and superstition, we should hesitate in attributing to those who invented and those who received such systems the epithet of rational. They could not, we should be apt to feel, be men like ourselves. But there stands the fact, and there it stands as an unanswerable proof, that sin is the murderer of the soul. It extinguishes the life of intelligence, the life of conscience and the life of religion. It turns man into a monster and clothes his Maker in garments of shame, and when it has done its work of death it complacently wipes its mouth and says, "I have done no evil." Surely the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

As to the first authors of idolatry, it deserves further to be mentioned that they not only sinned against the light

of reason, but against the light of revelation. Adam and the patriarchs were not left without Divine guidance in relation to the worship of God. They had an express law which they knew to be from Him. Those who departed from this law, or corrupted it by their own arbitrary inventions, were guilty of wilful and deliberate apostasy. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. The principle which prompted their apostasy is the principle which lies at the root of all the subsequent aberrations of their children. None sought after God, none desired the knowledge of His ways, none were disposed to glorify His name; and the consequence was that they were given up to walk in the light of their own eyes and after the imagination of their own hearts, and instead of light to embrace only the shadow of death.

The first idolaters sinned against revelation.

LECTURE IV.

THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

WE have already said that all the speculations of the human mind in relation to the Supreme Being may be reduced to three questions: *An sit Deus? Quid sit Deus? Qualis sit Deus?*—that is, they all have reference either to His Existence, His Nature or His Attributes. The first has been the subject of the preceding lectures; the second now demands our attention.

Quid sit Deus?

To the question concerning the nature and extent of our knowledge of God, two answers directly contradictory have been returned by philosophers. One party has affirmed that God is not only comprehensible in Himself, it being His nature to be intelligible, but that the actual comprehension of His essence, as made up of the ideas which constitute absolute reason or intelligence, is the condition of intelligence in relation to every other object. We may not only know Him, but we can know nothing else without knowing Him. "Philosophy," says Cousin,[1] "will not deny the accusation of wishing to penetrate into the depths of the Divine essence which common opinion declares to be incomprehensible. There are those who would have it incomprehensible. There are men, reasonable beings, whose vocation it is to comprehend and who believe in the existence of God, but who will believe in it only under the express condition that this existence is incomprehensible. What does this mean? Do

Two contradictory answers: (1.) God perfectly comprehensible.

[1] Introduc. to Hist. Phil., Linberg's Trans., p. 132.

they assert that this existence is absolutely incomprehensible? But that which is absolutely incomprehensible can have no relations which connect it with our intelligence, nor can it be in any wise admitted by us. A God who is absolutely incomprehensible by us is a God who, in regard to us, does not exist. In truth, what would a God be to us who had not seen fit to give us some portion of Himself, and so much of intelligence as might enable His wretched creature to elevate himself even unto Him, to comprehend Him, to believe in Him? Gentlemen, what is it to believe? It is, in a certain degree, to comprehend. Faith, whatever be its form, whatever be its object, whether vulgar or sublime—faith cannot but be the consent of reason to that which reason comprehends as true. This is the foundation of all faith. Take away the possibility of knowing, and there remains nothing to believe, for the very root of faith is removed. Will it be said that God is not altogether incomprehensible?—that He is somewhat comprehensible? Be it so, but let the measure of this be determined, and then I will maintain that it is precisely the measure of the comprehensibility of God which will be the measure of human faith. So little is God incomprehensible that His nature is constituted by ideas, by *those* ideas whose nature it is to be intelligible. . . . God, the substance of ideas, is essentially intelligent and essentially intelligible."

(2.) God perfectly incomprehensible.

The other party represents the Divine nature, in common with the nature of every other being, as utterly beyond the reach of thought. It never can be a positive element of consciousness. God is and ever must be the great unknown. The language in which the writers of this school sometimes express themselves is so strong as to convey the notion that God is so entirely aloof from all relation to our faculties that we know, and can know, absolutely nothing about Him but the bare fact of his existence.

"We cannot," says Bishop Browne, as quoted by Pro-

fessor Fraser,[1] "be said only to have *indistinct, confused* and *imperfect* apprehensions of the true nature of God and of His real attributes, *but none at all in any degree.* The true meaning of the word incomprehensible is that we have *no idea at all* of the real, true nature of God." Those patristic representations of the Deity which make Him "the unknown subject of attributes absolutely unknown," to which Bishop Browne subsequently refers, are traced by Berkeley[2] to the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. This author, Berkeley observes, "hath written upon the Divine attributes in a very singular style. In his treatise of the Celestial Hierarchy he saith that God is something above all essence and life, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν οὐσίαν καὶ ζωὴν*; and again in his treatise of the Divine names, that He is above all wisdom and understanding, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν*; *ineffable* and *innommable*, *ἄῤῥητος καὶ, ἀνώνυμος*; the wisdom of God he terms an unreasonable, unintelligent and foolish wisdom, *τὴν ἄλογον καὶ ἄνουν καὶ μωρὰν σοφίαν.* But then the reason he gives for expressing himself in this strange manner is, that the Divine wisdom is the cause of all reason, wisdom and understanding, and therein are contained the treasures of all wisdom and knowledge. He calls God *ὑπέρσοφος καὶ ὑπέρζως*, as if wisdom and life were words not worthy to express the Divine perfections; and he adds that the attributes, unintelligent and unperceiving, must be ascribed to the Divinity, not *κατ' ἔλλειψιν* by way of defect, but *καθ' ὑπεροχήν*, by way of eminency, which he explains by our giving the name of darkness to light inaccessible." This mode of dealing with the Divine nature Berkeley very happily characterizes as "the method of growing in expression and dwindling in notion, as clearing up doubts by nonsense and avoiding difficulties by running into affected contradictions."

Sir William Hamilton, whose philosophy by no means leads to a total denial—on the other hand it expressly postulates a necessary faith and a relative knowledge—of trans-

[1] Essays in Philos., p. 216. [2] Minute Philos., Dial. iv., § 19.

cendent Existence, has yet, at times, expressed himself in terms which justify the remark of Professor Fraser,[1] that "the Scottish philosopher seems to cut away every bridge by which man can have access to God." To maintain the absolute incognoscibility of God is to maintain the absolute impossibility of religion. The philosopher, accordingly, who in modern times has so triumphantly demonstrated that ontological science is a "mere fabric of delusion," was but consistent with himself when he resolved the essence of religion into obedience to the moral law.

Truth in the middle.

The truth lies between these extremes; God is at once known and unknown. In His transcendent Being, as absolute and infinite, though a necessary object of faith, He cannot be an object of thought. We cannot represent Him to the understanding, nor think Him as He is in Himself. But in and through the finite He has given manifestations of His incomprehensible reality, which, though not sufficient to satisfy the demands of speculation, are amply adequate for all the ends of religion. Human knowledge is the same in form, whatever may be the diversity of its objects. The knowledge of God is, consequently, not different in kind from the knowledge of any other being. Though unlimited in Himself, the absence of limitation in Him does not remove the limitation of our faculties, and we are compelled to know Him, as men, under the same conditions and restraints under which we know the finite. There are three conditions which consciousness never can transcend. The first is, that the immediate matter of our knowledge is not things as they are in themselves, but things as they appear—phenomena, and not the transcendent reality which underlies them and imparts to them their coherence and their unity. We know matter, we know mind, not absolutely as matter or mind, but as that which appears to us under the forms of extension, solidity, figure, motion, etc., or that which appears to us under the forms of thinking,

Three conditions of all knowledge.

[1] Essays in Philos., p. 222.

feeling, willing. Our knowledge, therefore, is confined to phenomena, and to phenomena only. Another condition is, that we know only those appearances of things which stand in relation to our faculties. There may be other appearances which they are capable of presenting to other intelligences. It would be unphilosophical to assume that our senses exhaust all the properties of matter, or our consciousness all the properties of mind. All that we can say is, that they exhaust all the appearances or phenomena which we are capable of knowing. Others may exist, but their existence to us is a blank. *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.* The third is, that in knowing phenomena, and the phenomena related to us, we are irresistibly impelled to postulate a transcendent something beyond them, as the ground of their coexistence and uniformity. As these "phenomena appear only in conjunction," says Sir William Hamilton,[1] "we are compelled by the constitution of our nature to think them conjoined in and by something; and as they are phenomena, we cannot think them the phenomena of nothing, but must regard them as the properties or qualities of something that is extended, solid, figured, etc. But this something, absolutely and in itself—*i. e.*, considered apart from its phenomena—is to us as zero. It is only in its qualities, only in its effects, in its relative or phenomenal existence, that it is cognizable or conceivable; and it is only by a law of thought which compels us to think something absolute and unknown, as the basis or condition of the relative and known, that this something obtains a kind of incomprehensible reality to us." To this unknown something, in its generic sense, as comprehending the basis of all phenomena, we apply the name of substance; in its specific sense, as indicating the basis of the phenomena of extension, we call it matter; as indicating the basis of the phenomena of consciousness, we call it mind or spirit. "Thus mind and matter"—I resume the words of Hamilton—"as known and knowable, are only two different series of phenomena or qualities; mind

[1] Metaphys., Lect. viii.

and matter, as unknown and unknowable, are the two substances in which these two different series of phenomena or qualities are supposed to inhere."

Phenomena and substance.

Hence in our knowledge of the finite there are evidently two elements or factors. There is, first, the relative and phenomenal, which can be conceived and known; this is the proper object of thought. There is, secondly, the substance or *substratum*, the *quasi* absolute, which cannot be represented in thought, but which is positively believed as existing. One element addresses itself to intelligence and the other to faith. Both are felt to be equally true. Both concur in every cognition of the finite. Take away the belief of substance, and you destroy the unity of phenomena; take away the conception of phenomena, and you destroy the conditions under which the belief of substance is realized. It is in and through the phenomena that substance is *known;* they are the manifestations of it as a transcendent reality; it is a real existence to us under these forms. As, then, the properties of matter and mind are relative manifestations of transcendent realities beyond them, so the finite, considered as such, is a relative manifestation of an absolute and infinite being; without whom the finite is as unintelligible as a phenomenon without substance. The notion of cause is a necessary element of reason. The notion of the finite is the notion of an effect, of something dependent in its being. A finite absolute is a contradiction in terms. The causal *nexus* as much necessitates the belief of the infinite and absolute when we contemplate the finite and dependent, as the *nexus* of substance and accident necessitates the belief of substance when we contemplate phenomena. Without the infinite, no finite—without the absolute, no relative, is as clear and unambiguous an utterance of human reason as no properties without a subject. "The really *necessary* causal judgment," says Professor Fraser,[1] "has, as it seems to us, another reference altogether,

Properties reveal substance, and the finite the infinite.

[1] Essays, p. 242.

than to laws of nature and uniformities of succession among the finite changes of the Universe. It is a general expression of the fundamental conviction of reason, that *every finite event and being depends on and practically reveals infinite or transcendent Power*. It is a vague utterance of dissatisfaction with an absolutely finite Universe—*totum, teres atque rotundum*—and of a positive belief, not only that finite objects exist, but that they do not *exhaust* existence, seeing that they depend on God. We are intellectually dissatisfied as long as the object of which we are in quest *is within the range of logical laws*, and therefore recognized as a power *only indefinitely great*. The dissatisfaction projects reason beyond the realm of finite, and therefore scientifically cognizable, existence. The mental necessity which thus conducts us to the Transcendent Being and Power, with or without the intervention of finite beings and second causes, is the root of the only truly *necessary* causal judgment we can discover." The finite accordingly is a real, though only a relative, manifestation of the infinite. It gives the fact of its existence; we know *that* it is, though we do not know it *as* it is.

In all this there is nothing peculiar either in our knowledge or our ignorance of God. The mystery which shrouds His being is the same in kind with the mystery which shrouds the being of every other object. In both cases there are the same elements—an incomprehensible reality which transcends the capacity of thought, and comprehensible phenomena which are readily moulded into the forms of the understanding; and in both cases the comprehensible is the exponent, the manifestation, the all that is knowable by us, of the incomprehensible. Properties reveal substance, and the finite reveals the infinite—not that properties are like substance, or the finite like the infinite. We have no right to make the one representative of the other. But properties are the modes under which substance appears to our understandings, and the finite the mode under which the

The finite not like infinite, but reveals it.

absolute appears. "We know God," says Calvin,[1] "who is Himself invisible only through His works. Therefore the apostle elegantly styles the worlds *τὰ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων βλεπόμενα*, as if one should say, 'the manifestation of things not apparent.' This is the reason why the Lord, that He may invite us to the knowledge of Himself, places the fabric of heaven and earth before our eyes, rendering Himself, in a certain manner, manifest in them. For His eternal power and Godhead, as Paul says, are there exhibited. And that declaration of David is most true, that the heavens, though without a tongue, are yet eloquent heralds of the glory of God, and that this most beautiful order of nature silently proclaims His admirable wisdom. . . . As for those who proudly soar above the world to seek God in His unveiled essence, it is impossible but that at length they should entangle themselves in a multitude of absurd figments. For God, by other means invisible, as we have already said, clothes Himself, so to speak, with the image of the world in which He would present Himself to our contemplation. They who will not deign to behold Him thus magnificently arrayed in the incomparable vesture of the heavens and the earth, afterwards suffer the just punishment of their proud contempt in their own ravings. Therefore, as soon as the name of God sounds in our ears, or the thought of Him occurs to our minds, let us clothe Him with this most beautiful ornament; finally, let the world become our school, if we desire rightly to know God."

As it is the causal *nexus* which upon the contemplation of the finite elicits in consciousness the necessary belief of the Infinite, and as the effects which we behold, being effects, cannot be the attributes or properties of God, the question arises, What are the intuitions by which we represent in thought the comprehensible element of our knowledge? How, in other words, do we think God? What are the data which we combine in the conception, and what is our security that these data

The question.

[1] Comment. on Genesis, Argument (Calvin Transl. Soc.), vol. i., pp. 59, 60.

are the real appearances of such a Being to minds like ours?

To this the only satisfactory answer which can be given is, that all the intuitions, or, as Locke would express it, all the simple ideas, which enter into the complex notion of God, as thought by the human understanding, are derived from the human soul. The possibility of theology depends upon the postulate that man reflects the image of His Maker. We have seen that reason is so constituted that when adequately developed it spontaneously ascends from the phenomena of experience to a First Cause, an absolute and infinite Being which it is constrained to construe as intelligent, powerful and good, as a just moral Ruler and the supreme object of worship and adoration. Intelligence, wisdom, power, liberty, goodness, justice, truth, righteousness and beauty,—these are attributes without which God is God no more. Whence do we derive these concepts? Whence are our notions of knowledge, goodness and truth? Whence our notion of power? Most evidently they spring from our own minds. Our own consciousness is the storehouse from which they are drawn. We can conceive no intelligence but the human; we can think no power but that which is suggested by the energy of our own wills; we can have no moral intuitions but those which are given by our own consciences. Man, therefore, sits for the picture that he sketches of God. But is God only man upon a larger scale? Is the infinite only a higher degree of the finite? It is a saying of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite—and it has generally been accepted as a sufficient indication of the truth—that in ascending from the creature to God we proceed by the method of causality, of negation and of eminence. In the way of causality I am constrained to affirm that every perfection which is contained in the effect was previously contained in the cause. But as the perfections of the creature exist under many limitations and conditions which are inconsistent with the notion of the Infinite, I am

All concepts of God from the human soul.

led in the way of negation to remove those restrictions and defects, and to posit the perfections in the abstract. Then, by the way of eminence, I strive to represent these perfections as expanded even to infinity. Thought struggles to magnify until it sinks back upon itself exhausted in the effort. Examples of all these methods the Scholastic divines[1] profess to find in the Scriptures. Thus, Psalm xciv. 9, 10 is an instance of the way of causality: "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know?" In Numbers xxiii. 19 we have an illustration of the method of negation: "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" The method of eminence is signalized in Isaiah lv. 8, 9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

This is the process—and it is a process natural to reason, as inevitable as the laws of thought—by which we are led to the belief of an absolutely perfect being. The notion of an *ens realissimum* is not the arbitrary product of the fancy, but the necessary result of speculation, when a cause is sought for the manifold phenomena of the finite. Relative perfection is construed as the manifestation of the absolute. It is the form under which it appears to our conditioned consciousness. It is not the same with it, nor like it, but reveals it—reveals it as existing; reveals it as a necessary article of faith conceived only under analogy. The relative perfection, in other words, is the form or symbol under which the absolute appears.

And here let me explain the terms *absolute* and *infinite* in their relation to God, which have become household words

[1] De Moor, c. i., § 13.

of modern philosophy. The absolute is that which is self-existent and underived—which exists without dependence upon, or necessary relation to, any other being. The infinite is that which includes all reality, all being and all perfection within itself. It is the totality of existence. It is not the unfinishable of Sir William Hamilton, for that is essentially imperfect. It is that absolute which he has described as the τέλειος of the Greeks—a complete whole, to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken. In the senses here explained the infinite and the absolute coincide. They are only different phases of one and the same thing. There can be no infinite without the absolute, no absolute without the infinite. There cannot be necessary self-existent being which is not also unconditionally unlimited being. Hence, among divines, the absolute and infinite are, for the most part, interchangeable terms. "The metaphysical representation of the Deity," says Mansel,[1] "as absolute and infinite, must necessarily, as the profoundest metaphysicians have acknowledged, amount to nothing less than the sum of all reality. 'What kind of an absolute being is that,' says Hegel, 'which does not contain in itself all that is actual, even evil included?' We may repudiate the conclusion with indignation, but the reasoning is unassailable. If the absolute and infinite is an object of human conception at all, this, and none other, is the conception required. That which is conceived as absolute and infinite must be conceived as containing within itself the sum, not only of all actual, but of all possible modes of being. For if any actual mode can be denied of it, it is related to that mode and limited by it; and if any possible mode can be denied of it, it is capable of becoming more than it now is, and such a capability is a limitation. Indeed it is obvious that the entire distinction between the possible and the actual can have no existence as regards the absolutely infinite; for an unrealized possibility is necessarily a relation and a limit.

The terms *absolute* and *infinite* explained.

[1] Limits of Rel. Thought, Lect. ii.

The scholastic saying, *Deus est actus purus*, ridiculed as it has been by modern critics, is in truth but the expression in technical language of the almost unanimous voice of philosophy, both in earlier and later times." To this quotation may be added a confirmatory quotation from the *Living Temple* of John Howe:[1] "Necessary being is most unmixed or purest being, without allay. That is pure which is full of itself. Purity is not here meant in a corporeal sense [which few will think], nor in the moral; but, as with metaphysicians, it signifies simplicity of essence. And in its present use is more especially intended to signify that simplicity which is opposed to the composition of act and possibility. We say, then, that necessary being imports purest actuality, which is the ultimate and highest perfection of being. For it signifies no remaining possibility, yet unreplete or not filled up; and consequently, the fullest exuberancy and entire confluence of all being, as in its fountain and original source. We need not here look further to evince this than the native import of the very terms themselves, *necessity* and *possibility;* the latter whereof is not so fitly said to be excluded the former, as contingency is, but to be swallowed up of it; as fullness takes up all the space which were otherwise nothing but vacuity or emptiness. It is plain, then, that necessary being engrosses all possible being, both that is and (for the same reason) that ever was so. For nothing can be, or ever was, in possibility to come into being, but what either must spring, or hath sprung, from the necessary self-subsisting being. So that unto all that vast possibility a proportionable actuality of this being must be understood to correspond. . . . Necessary being can never alter, and consequently can never come actually to be what it already is not; upon which account it is truly said, *In æternis, posse et esse sunt idem.* Wherefore in it is nothing else but pure actuality, as profound and vast as is the utmost possibility of all created or producible being; *i. e.*, it can be nothing other than it is, but can do all things; of which more hereafter."

[1] Pt. I., chap. iv., § 2.

Now the question arises, What can we know, or rather what can we think, of absolute and infinite perfection? As infinite and absolute, it is obvious that we cannot represent it in thought at all. We cannot define it so as to make it enter as a positive element in consciousness. But still absolute perfection is an imperative demand of reason; the relative is unmeaning without it. The human mind cannot dispense with the faith of it. So far from being a chimera, or a mere illusion of metaphysical speculation, it is rooted and grounded in the very structure of the soul. But because we cannot conceive the perfections of God, as they are in themselves and as they exist in Him—that is, because we cannot think them as infinite and absolute—does it follow that in trying to think them we think nothing at all; or if we think anything, we think only a delusive appearance?

The absolute not definable, yet the mind demands it.

This brings us back to our original question, to answer which it must be recollected that our conception of the perfections of God embraces two elements—a positive and a negative one. The positive one is the abstract notion of any particular perfection, such as wisdom, intelligence, justice, truth, benevolence or power, furnished by the phenomena of our own consciousness. The negative one is a protest against ascribing the perfection to God under the limitations and conditions of human experience.

The question answered.

Positive and negative elements of the conception.

A perfection abstractly considered is only a generalization of language; it is incapable of being realized in thought except as given in some special and definite manifestation. Knowledge in the abstract, for example, has no real existence; it is only a term expressive of that in which all single acts of knowledge concur, and applicable alike to every form of cognition. It marks a relation which universally obtains. Now, when we attribute knowledge to God, we mean that there exists in Him a relation analogous to that signalized by this term

How we attribute to God knowledge;

among us. When we undertake to realize the relation as it exists in God, we transcend the limits of our faculties. We can only say that it is to Him what the highest perfection of cognition is to us. But as we are obliged to think it in some concrete form, we conceive it as a species of intuition, in which the Divine consciousness penetrates at a glance the whole universe of being and possibility, and surveys the nature and relations of things with absolute, infallible certainty. The relation in Him expresses all that we compass by intuition, reasoning, imagination, memory and testimony. The analogy is real and true. The things analogous are by no means alike. God has not faculties like ours, which are as much a badge of weakness as a mark of distinction and honour. He knows without succession, and apprehends all relations without reasoning, comparison or memory. He is not subject to the condition of time nor the necessities of inference. But though knowledge in Him is manifested differently from knowledge in us, yet the essence contained in the abstract relation finds its counterpart in a manner suited to an infinite consciousness. Hence we think Divine, under the analogy, not under the similitude, of human cognition. There is that in Him which stands in the same relation to certainty as intuition to us. And Locke long ago remarked that we can have a clear and precise notion of relations, even when the things related are very partially or obscurely apprehended.

and how we attribute to Him power,

In the same way power, abstractly considered, expresses the relation of a cause to its effect. In itself we can no more conceive it in its human than its Divine manifestations. It is that in the cause which produces the effect, and we think it only in connection with its effects. Now, this relation is conceived as subsisting in God with reference to the products of His sovereign will. There is something in Him analogous to what we experience in the operations of our own wills. We think of void space. We conceive it occupied by body which has just been called into being. We cannot repre-

sent the rationale of creation, but we can clearly comprehend the kind of relation implied in the creative fiat. It is as intelligible as that between impulse and motion.

goodness, justice, love.

The same holds in the case of goodness, justice and love, and all the moral and intellectual perfections which we ascribe to the Almighty. The abstract notions are generalizations from the sphere of our own experience, and we think them in God as something which is the same to Him as these relations are to us. The thing positively represented is the human manifestation in its purest form, but it is attributed to God in the way of analogy, and not of actual similitude. His infinite perfections are veiled under finite symbols. It is only the shadow of them that falls upon the human understanding. Such is the process. A perfection is given in man under manifold forms and conditions. The perfection is reduced to an abstract notion, equally realized in all and equally cogitable in all, but in itself actually inconceivable. We ascribe it to God in the perfection of its essence as an abstract notion, and endeavour to think it under relations in Him analogous to those in which it is revealed in us. We are sure that there is something in Him which corresponds to these relations in us. Hence the positive element in our efforts to think God is always analogical.

The positive element always analogical.

"Thomas Aquinas," says Berkeley,[1] "expresseth his sense of this point in the following manner: All perfections, saith he, derived from God to the creatures are in a certain higher sense, or (as the Schoolmen term it) *eminently* in God. Whenever, therefore, a name borrowed from any perfection in the creature is attributed to God, we must exclude from its signification everything that belongs to the imperfect manner wherein that attribute is found in the creature. Whence he concludes that knowledge in God is not a habit, but a pure act. And, again, the same doctor observes that our intellect gets its notions of all sorts of

[1] Minute Philos., Dial. iv., §§ 20, 21.

perfections from the creatures, and that as it apprehends those perfections, so it signifies them by names. Therefore, saith he, in attributing those names to God we are to consider two things: first, the perfections themselves, as goodness, life and the like, which are properly in God; and, secondly, the manner which is peculiar to the creature, and cannot, strictly and properly speaking, be said to agree to the Creator. And although Suarez, with other Schoolmen, teacheth that the mind of man conceiveth knowledge and will to be in God as faculties or operations by analogy only to created beings, yet he gives it plainly as his opinion that when knowledge is said not to be properly in God, it must be understood in a sense including imperfection, such as discursive knowledge, or the like imperfect kind found in the creatures; and that none of those imperfections in the knowledge of men or angels, belonging to the formal notion of knowledge, or to knowledge as such, it will not thence follow that knowledge in its proper, formal sense may not be attributed to God; and of all knowledge taken in general for the clear, evident understanding of all truth, he expressly affirms that it is in God, and that this was never denied by any philosopher who believed a God. It was indeed a current opinion in the schools that even being itself should be attributed analogically to God and the creatures. . . . But to prevent any man's being led by mistaking the scholastic use of the terms *analogy* and *analogical* into an opinion that we cannot frame in any degree a true and proper notion of attributes applied by analogy, or, in the school phrase, *predicated analogically*, it may not be amiss to inquire into the true sense and meaning of these words. Every one knows that *analogy* is a Greek word used by mathematicians to signify a similitude of proportions. For instance, when we observe that two is to six as three is to nine, this similitude or equality of proportion is turned *analogy*. And although *proportion* strictly signifies the habitude or relation of one quantity to another, yet in a looser and translated sense it

Scholastic use of the term *analogical* explained.

hath been applied to signify every other habitude, and consequently the term *analogy* comes to signify all similitude of relations or habitudes whatsoever. Hence the Schoolmen tell us there is analogy between intellect and sight, forasmuch as intellect is to the mind what sight is to the body, and that he who governs the state is analogous to him who steers a ship. Hence a prince is analogically styled a pilot, being to the state as a pilot is to his vessel. For the further clearing of this point, it is to be observed, that a twofold analogy is distinguished by the Schoolmen—metaphorical and proper. Of the first kind there are frequent instances in Holy Scripture attributing human parts and passions to God. When He is represented as having a finger, an eye or an ear—when He is said to repent, to be angry or grieved—every one sees that analogy is merely metaphorical, because those parts and passions taken in the proper signification must in every degree necessarily, and from the formal nature of the thing, include imperfection. When, therefore, it is said the finger of God appears in this or that event, men of common sense mean no more but that it is as truly ascribed to God as the works wrought by human fingers are to man, and so of the rest. But the case is different when wisdom and knowledge are attributed to God. Passions and senses, as such, imply defect, but in knowledge simply, or as such, there is no defect. Knowledge, therefore, in the proper, formal meaning of the word, may be attributed to God proportionably—that is, preserving a proportion to the infinite nature of God. We may say, therefore, that as God is infinitely above man, so is the knowledge of God infinitely above the knowledge of man, and this is what Cajetan calls *analogia proprie facta*. And after this same analogy we must understand all those attributes to belong to the Deity which in themselves simply and as such denote perfection. We may, therefore, consistently with what hath been premised, affirm that all sorts of perfection which we can conceive in a finite spirit are in God, but without any of that alloy which is found in the crea-

tures. This doctrine, therefore, of analogical perfection in God, or of knowing God by analogy, seems very much misunderstood and misapplied by those who would infer from thence that we cannot frame any direct or proper notion, though never so inadequate, of knowledge or wisdom as they are in the Deity, or understand any more of them than one born blind can of light and colours."

This passage of Berkeley, aimed at the theory of Bishop Browne, maintained in the Divine Analogy, which seems to preclude the possibility of any real or certain knowledge of God, labours under one defect. It takes for granted that we have a positive notion of knowledge, wisdom and every other human perfection, simply and in themselves. Yet no one has more conclusively shown than himself that abstract terms have no objects corresponding to them, but are only contrivances of language for the abridgment of human thought. They express nothing that can ever be conceived apart from individuals. We cannot, therefore, think knowledge in general except as manifested in some particular instance of cognition. In the given instance we can leave out of view what is special and distinguishing, and attend only to what equally belongs to every other instance; but something that has been given in intuition must be represented in thought. Hence, to attribute knowledge to God is to think Him as knowing in some way. We must take some form of human consciousness and transfer it to Him. But the most perfect form, that of intuition itself, is manifested in us under conditions which cannot be applied to God. But the most perfect form is the highest under which we can conceive it. As, therefore, we cannot attribute it in this finite form to God, all that we can say is that knowledge in Him is analogous to knowledge in us. It is a relation which implies absolute certainty and infallibility. We attribute the finite to God under a protest that the finite form only expresses a similarity of relation.

Berkeley criticised.

The negative element a protest.

Again, the difference betwixt Divine and human know-

ledge is not one simply of degree. It is a difference in kind. God's knowledge is not like ours, and therefore we are utterly unable to think it as it is in Him. We can only think it under the analogy of ours in the sense of a similarity of relations. It is to Him what ours is to us. It is to the whole universe of being, actual and possible, what ours is to the small portion that presents itself to our faculties.

This protest is only a series of negations—it affirms simply what God is not, but by no means enables us to conceive what He really and positively is. It is the infinite and absolute applied to the attributes which we are striving to represent. Still these negative notions are of immense importance. They are clear and pregnant confessions that there is a transcendent reality beyond all that we are able to conceive or think, in comparison with which our feeble thoughts are but darkening counsel by words without knowledge. They reveal an unknown sphere to which the region of the the known bears no more proportion than a point to infinite space. They stand as an awful warning of the immensity of human ignorance. Besides this, they are regulative principles, which indicate how far we are at liberty to reason from the positive element of our knowledge, and apply our conclusions to God. When the potency of these conclusions lies in the finite forms under which the abstract perfection is thought, and not in the perfection itself, abstractly considered, we may be sure of error. We are then making God altogether such a one as we ourselves, and transferring to Him the limitations and conditions which attach to our finite consciousness. Incalculable mischief has been done by reasoning from human conceptions of the attributes of God under their human manifestations, and silently overlooking those salutary negations which if attended to would at once convict our conclusions of blasphemy. Hence the negative in thought has a positive regulative value. It is a beacon to warn us and to guide us.

Importance of these negative ideas.

The negative element of positive regulative value.

Sum of results.

The result of this inquiry into the nature and extent of our knowledge of God may be summed up in the following propositions. As we know only in and through our own faculties, our knowledge must be determined by the nature of our faculties. The conditions of consciousness are such that we can never directly apprehend aught but the phenomenal and relative; and yet in the apprehension of that we are constrained to admit a real and an absolute as the necessary explanation of appearances. The infinite is never apprehended in itself; it is only known in the manifestations of it contained in the finite. As existing, it is known—it is a positive affirmation of intelligence; but it cannot be translated into the forms of the understanding—it cannot be conceived, except as the annihilation of those limitations and conditions which are essential to the possibility of human thought. We know *that* it is, but we know not *what* it is. In our actual concept of God, while we are constrained to recognize Him as an infinite and absolutely perfect being, yet we are unable to realize absolute and infinite perfection in thought. We only know that it must be; but our utmost efforts to grasp it amount to nothing more than the transmutation of a series of negations into delusive affirmations. The matter of our thought, in representing the Divine perfections, is taken from the phenomena of human consciousness. The perfections which we experience in ourselves are reduced to their utmost abstraction and purity, and then applied to God in the way of analogy. We do not know His perfections, consequently, as they are in themselves or in Him, but as they appear to us under finite forms and symbols. This analogical conception, however, is accompanied with the belief that the relative necessarily implies the absolute; and therefore in the very act of imperfect thought our nature protests against the imperfect as an adequate or complete representation. We feel that we see through a glass darkly—that it is only a glimpse of truth that we obtain; but the little, though partial and defective—a mere point compared to the immense reality—is inexpress-

ibly precious, for its object is God. If it is only the hem of His garment that we are permitted to behold, it impresses us with a sense of His glory.

This relative, partial, analogical knowledge of God is the Catholic doctrine of theologians. If authorities were needed, I might quote them even *ad nauseam*. Let a few examples suffice. "His essence, indeed," says Calvin,[1] "is incomprehensible, utterly transcending all human thought; but on each of His works His glory is engraven in characters so bright, so distinct, and so illustrious that none, however dull and illiterate, can plead ignorance as their excuse." Again:[2] "Hence it is obvious that in seeking God the most direct path and the fittest method is not to attempt with presumptuous curiosity to pry into His essence, which is rather to be adored than minutely discussed; but to contemplate Him in His works, by which He draws near, becomes familiar, and in a manner communicates Himself to us."

Theologians at one here.

"The terms by which attributes are predicated of God," says Cocceius,[3] "are employed in condescension to our modes of thinking and speaking. For, as Nazianzen affirms, to know God is difficult, to speak Him is impossible; or rather, to speak God is impossible, to know Him is still more impossible. His attributes are to be understood analogically. The perfections which we find in the creatures testify to a fountain inconceivably more perfect in God, to which the creature is in some measure assimilated and bears witness."

"We cannot have," says Charnock,[4] "an adequate or suitable conception of God. He dwells in inaccessible light—inaccessible to the acuteness of our fancy, as well as the weakness of our sense. If we could have thoughts of Him as high and excellent as His nature, our conceptions must be as infinite as His nature. All our imaginations of Him cannot represent Him, because every created species is finite; it cannot, therefore, represent to us a full and substantial notion

[1] Inst., Lib. I., c. v., § 1.
[2] Inst., Lib. I., c. v., § 9.
[3] Sum. Theol., c. ix., § 33.
[4] Works, vol. i., p. 274.

of an infinite being. We cannot think or speak worthily enough of Him, who is greater than our words, vaster than our understandings. Whatsoever we speak or think of God is handed first to us by the notice we have of some perfection in the creature, and explains to us some particular excellency of God, rather than the fullness of His essence. . . . But the creatures whence we draw our lessons being finite, and our understandings being finite, it is utterly impossible to have a notion of God commensurate to the immensity and spirituality of His being. God is not like to visible creatures, nor is there any proportion between Him and the most spiritual." In another place he says,[1] "God is, therefore, a spirit incapable of being seen, and infinitely incapable of being understood. . . . There is such a disproportion between an infinite object and a finite understanding, that it is utterly impossible either to behold or comprehend Him."

"It is a true rule of theologians," says Macrovius,[2] "that God and the creature have nothing in common but the name. The reason is, because God differs from a creature more than a creature from nonentity."[3]

"God," says Augustin,[4] "is ineffable; we can more readily say what He is not than what He is."

The objection that relative and analogical knowledge does not represent God to us.

I come now to consider the objection, that if our knowledge of God is only relative and analogical, it cannot be accepted as any just or true representation of the Divine Being, but of something essentially different. It is not God that we know, but a mere series of appearances—the products of our own minds, which we have substituted in His place and hypostatized with His name. If nothing more were meant than that we do not know God as He is in Himself, and as, consequently, He knows Himself, the objection would certainly have to be admitted. No such knowledge is competent to the creature. The finite can

[1] Vol. i., p. 256.
[2] Theol. Polem., c. iv.
[3] Cf. Th. Aquin. Sum. Theol., Pars Prim., Qu. xii., 3, 4.
[4] Enarrat. in Psalm lxxxv. 12.

never hope to comprehend the Infinite as the Infinite comprehends itself. But if it is meant—which it obviously must be if the objection is designed to destroy the foundations of religion—that our knowledge of God does not apprehend the appearances which such a being must make to minds constituted like ours, that the things which we think are not real manifestations of the Infinite, adapted to our faculties of intelligence, the objection is assuredly without reason. Either our whole nature is a lie, or the Being whom we thus know under finite symbols is the supreme and everlasting Jehovah. We know Him as the cause, the prime producing cause of all that exists; and this is no delusion. The relation in which He stands to His works is clear and unambiguous, though the mode in which He realizes it transcends our capacity of thought. We know Him as intelligent and good. Wisdom and benevolence are conspicuously displayed in the general order and special adaptations which fall within the compass of our experience; and unless that primitive law of intelligence which compels us to think design as the only adequate explanation of such phenomena is a lie, then we are sure that God is wise and knowing and good. Conscience gives Him as a moral ruler, and consequently as the supreme disposer of all things; and unless conscience is false, the testimony must be accepted as true. Every part of our nature points to Him, and bears record to His character in the relations which He sustains to us. We must, therefore, construe our whole nature into an organ of deceit, or recognize these partial and relative conceptions as just conceptions of God as far as He appears to us. Beyond that appearance we do not venture to go. Every step we take in reaching our highest conceptions of God is a step under the impulse and direction of principles of belief which constitute an essential part of our being, and without which we should be little better than the beasts that perish. Our knowledge as far as it goes is true, if our faculties are not false. If our faculties are false, any other knowledge which was in and through them would be equally liable to suspicion. The

symbols under which we represent God are not arbitrary creatures of the fancy, but the necessary products of thought in obedience to laws which it cannot transgress; and which, while a proof of limitation and defect, are, at the same time, a guarantee of truth. All that we pretend is to know God as He appears, and what we maintain is that it is really He who does so appear.

Applies equally to all knowledge.

The objection in question is equally valid against all human knowledge. It is the old cry of the skeptic. It is not matter that we know, it is not mind that we know; it is only the phenomena of which we are conscious, and these phenomena may be the fantastic creations of the thinking subject, or shadows which come and go upon the surface of our being without any cause to which we can assign them. How do we know that the properties which we attribute to matter really represent anything in matter, or how do we know that such a thing as matter exists at all? How do we know that thought, volition, feeling are the properties of any permanent subject, rather than transient events which succeed each other in time without being at all dependent upon each other, or upon aught else, for their existence?

Answer to the objection.

There is but one answer to all such sophistical objections. We are obliged to trust in the veracity of consciousness. We know because we believe. Consciousness assures us of our own existence as a thinking subject, and consciousness also assures us of the existence of another world without us. We accept matter and mind as facts, because our nature constrains us to believe them. The phenomena under which we think them, the same consciousness represents as the appearances which *they* make to us; and therefore we accept them as their appearances, as their attitude and relation to our intelligence. It is precisely the same with our knowledge of God. The man, therefore, who is free from scruples as to the existence of the soul or the material world, who is per-

suaded that the phenomena which they present to him are not vain and delusive shows, but sober and permanent realities, is inconsistent with himself in denying equal certainty to our knowledge of God. His argument, legitimately carried out, would land him in universal skepticism. It is enough that we have the same guarantee for the truth and certainty of our knowledge of God as we have for the truth and certainty of our own being and the existence of an outer world. The knowledge of both is subject to the same limitations, the same suspicions, the same cavils. They stand or fall together. If one is shadow, all is shadow; if one is solid, all is solid and substantial. There is no middle ground. We know absolutely nothing, or what we know is true as far as we know it. Our knowledge is imperfect because we are imperfect. The plenitude of being cannot appear to us, but what our faculties are capable of receiving is none the less to be relied on because they do not receive all that actually exists.

"It does not follow," says Mansel,[1] "that our representations are untrue because they are imperfect. To assert that a representation is *untrue* because it is relative to the mind of the receiver, is to overlook the fact that truth itself is nothing more than a relation. Truth and falsehood are not properties of things in themselves, but of our conceptions, and are tested not by the comparison of conceptions with things in themselves, but with things as they are given in some other relation. My conception of an object of sense is *true* when it corresponds to the characteristics of the object as I perceive it, but the perception itself is equally a relation and equally implies the co-operation of human faculties. Truth in relation to no intelligence is a contradiction in terms. Our highest conception of absolute truth is that of truth in relation to all intelligences. But of the consciousness of intelligences different from our own we have no knowledge, and can make no application. Truth, therefore, in relation to man admits of no other test than

[1] Limits of Rel. Thought, Lect. v.

the harmonious consent of all human faculties, and as no such faculty can take cognizance of the Absolute, it follows that correspondence with the Absolute can never be required as a test of truth. The utmost deficiency that can be charged against human faculties amounts only to this: that we cannot say that we know God as God knows Himself—that the truth of which our finite minds are susceptible may, for aught we know, be but the passing shadow of some higher reality which exists only in the Infinite Intelligence."

Confusion has no doubt been introduced into the subject by silently interpreting phenomenon and appearance as equivalent to a sham or dream. They are contemplated as void of reality. But what is reality? What is the only reality which our faculties can grasp? It is not a thing in its absolute nature, as it exists in itself independently of any perceiving mind; nor even a thing, as Mansel expresses it, "as it must manifest itself to all possible intelligences under all possible laws of apprehension." But reality is that which we perceive to exist, and we perceive it as existing under the relation in which it stands to our faculties. The phenomenon is nothing but the reality manifested to consciousness under the conditions of consciousness itself. It is not, then, a sham, a dream, *a mere shine*. The contrast of reality is those fictions or creatures of imagination which in dreams may be mistaken for realities, but which in our waking moments we know to be manifestations of nothing apart from ourselves. Hence a phenomenal or a relative is none the less a real knowledge; it is the knowledge of real existence as that existence is manifested to us. The existence is independent of us; the manifestation is in and through the relation of the object to our consciousness.

This knowledge of God both true and adequate.

But I proceed to affirm, in the next place, that our relative analogical knowledge of God is not only true and trustworthy, but amply adequate for all the purposes of religion. It does not satisfy the needs of speculation, but it is admirably adapted to the ends of devotion. If it is lacking in that

characteristic which has a tendency to puff up, it is not lacking in the other and nobler quality—the tendency to edify.

It is also adapted to our present condition.

In order to appreciate the force of this consideration, it must be borne in mind that man's present condition is not final and complete, but initial and preparatory. He is looking forward to a better and more exalted state. The knowledge which he needs is the knowledge which will best adapt him to acquire and intensify those habits of thought and of feeling and of action which shall find their full scope in his future condition. His present business is education, and not satisfaction or enjoyment. To say that he needs education is to say that he is imperfect, and that there are impediments to his proficiency which it demands patience, industry, energy and perseverance to surmount. These impediments serve at once as a motive to stimulate exertion, and as the means of fixing more firmly into the character the activities they call forth. The intensity of an action measures its tendency to generate and mature a habit. To a being under discipline an absolute knowledge of Divine things, were such a knowledge conceivable or possible, would be wholly unsuitable. There would be no room for faith, for consideration, for candour, for the balancing of motives; there would be no trial of one's love of truth, or duty, or good. If we knew as God knows, we should be as God is. What discipline requires is a mixed state, in which men may to some extent control their opinions and regulate their choice—a state in which evil, to say the least, is possible. In such a state the real principles which determine and constitute the moral character of the man are capable of being fully displayed. Error may be accepted as well as truth, temptations may prevail as well as be overcome, man may revolt from as well as obey God. But the great thing to be attained is the habit of entire acquiescence in the will of God as a matter of free, voluntary choice. God presents Himself as a portion to the soul to be chosen, not forced upon it; and in order that the choice

may have its full significancy in determining and expressing character, it must be made under circumstances in which there can be motives and inducements to the contrary. Hence our imperfection in knowledge is the badge of our probationary condition. Absolute, demonstrative certainty would preclude all trial, all choice—that is, a state to be won as a prize, and not one in which to begin a moral career.

In our present condition we have just that kind of knowledge which is suited to our circumstances and our destiny. Man's earthly state may be contemplated in three aspects:

Three aspects of man's earthly state.

1. As a state of pure and unmixed probation, in which by the free act of his will he was to determine the permanent type of his being. 2. As a state of sin and misery, the legal and natural consequence of his free determination in his previous state. 3. As a state of partial recovery, in which he is to acquire a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Contemplated in his first estate, he had to the full that relative analogical knowledge which falls to the lot of his faculties. He knew his relations to God as his creator, his moral ruler and his final reward. He knew the rule of his duty, both natural and positive, and was warned of the consequences which must result from transgression. But his knowledge, as imperfect and analogical, was founded in faith; it rested upon principles which he was obliged to accept, but which he could not explain. He was thus brought, even in the sphere of the understanding, face to face with the will of God. He was capable of asking questions which he could not answer. He could project his reason beyond the limits which circumscribed his faculties. All this was admirably suited to him, as a being to be confirmed in perfect acquiescence with the will of God. If he should be content with his prescribed limits, and make the law of his life "not my will, but Thine be done," he had the gracious promise that what he knew not now, he should know hereafter. To complain, therefore,

The relative analogical knowledge of God suited to the first,

of the limitations of his knowledge is to complain that he was put upon probation at all. Higher knowledge would have rendered all trial a mockery. To have been able to answer all questions would have been equivalent to the impossibility of being deceived or seduced. Hence Adam's knowledge was exactly the kind of knowledge suited to his religion. Had he followed his nature—simply believed where it prompted him to believe without the ability to comprehend; had he been content to know only where science was possible to his faculties; had he been willing to accept as facts what he could not explain as science,—had he, in other words, submitted with cheerfulness to the appointment of God, he might have maintained his integrity for ever. An absolute knowledge is as incompatible with probation as mathematical certainty with doubt. The understanding would have absolute control if it had absolute knowledge. But there is no medium between absolute and relative knowledge. The latter may differ from itself in degrees, but all the degrees of it are in contradiction to absolute science. The objection we are considering is not to the degree in which man, as man, has it, but to the kind of knowledge itself. The objection would abolish all limitation, and have our theology the ectypal theology of God.

In the next place, contemplate man in his fallen condition as a sinner, and the knowledge which he has is, as precisely, adapted to his state. It is enough to make manifest his guilt and depravity. It reveals the abnormal tendencies of his soul. It affords a conspicuous proof of the charge which God brings against the race, and at the same time prevents the race from suppressing its real dispositions under a constraining, external pressure. Man is largely at liberty to express himself—to develop the very core of his moral condition. The difficulties and perplexities he encounters in solving the enigmas of his being only afford opportunity of exhibiting in brighter colours the real enmity of his heart against God. They enable him to prove that he is a sinner beyond the possi-

and to the second,

bility of doubt. At the same time they furnish the instruments by which the Holy Spirit prepares him for the reception of the gospel. They give rise to a conflict, a struggle; the tendency of which, under the influence of grace, is to mould and subdue. To give an elect sinner absolute knowledge would be to dispense with the whole process of conviction of sin, and all those conflicts of pride, faith and unbelief by which, in humility, he is led to the Saviour. There would be no room for self-examination, for faith or for prayer. To give a non-elect sinner absolute knowledge would be to make him a devil and to drive him to despair.

and to the third aspect of our condition.

If we contemplate man in his state of partial recovery, relative knowledge is the knowledge which alone is adapted to his duties. He has to form a holy character; he has to form it within comparatively a short period. His graces must be put to the test and tried and strengthened. He must be liable to the assaults of doubt, of fear, of unbelief. He must be exposed to imposture and deceit, that his candour, sincerity and love of truth may have scope for exercise, and increase in their intensity. He must walk, therefore, by faith, and not by sight. Now all this is incompatible with absolute knowledge; it is incompatible with even much higher degrees of relative knowledge than we now enjoy. Hence, in every aspect our knowledge is enough for the ends of religion. All that is required is true humility—a spirit of perfect contentment with our lot. If we see through a glass darkly, it is because a brighter vision would be destructive of the ends of our present moral state.

It also converts our daily life into an argument for devotion.

Then, again, the finite symbols under which we know God form a natural transition from our natural to our religious life; or rather are the means by which our daily life is converted into an argument for devotion. If it is only in the creature that we see God, the creature should be obviously subordinated to the glory of God; and if human affections are to be directed toward God, the relations under which

they are developed with reference to each other are the relations under which they must fasten on Him. "We are not called upon," says Mansel,[1] "to live two distinct lives in this world. It is not required of us that the household of our nature should be divided against itself—that those feelings of love and reverence and gratitude which move us in a lower degree toward our human relatives and friends should be altogether thrown aside and exchanged for some abnormal state of ecstatic contemplation, when we bring our prayers and praises and thanks before the footstool of our Father in heaven. We are none of us able to grasp in speculation the nature of the Infinite and Eternal, but we all live and move among our fellow-men, at times needing their assistance, at times soliciting their favours, at times seeking to turn away their anger. We have all, as children, felt the need of the supporting care of parents and guardians; we have all, in the gradual progress of education, required instruction from the wisdom of teachers; we have all offended against our neighbours, and known the blessings of forgiveness or the penalty of unappeased anger. We can all, therefore, taught by the inmost consciousness of our human feelings, place ourselves in communion with God when He manifests Himself under human images. 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen,' says the Apostle Saint John, 'how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' Our heavenly affections must in some measure take their source and their form from our earthly ones; our love toward God, if it is to be love at all, must not be wholly unlike our love towards our neighbour; the motives and influences which prompt us when we make known our wants and pour forth our supplications to an earthly parent are graciously permitted by our heavenly Father to be the type and symbol of those by which our intercourse with Him is to be regulated."

There is another aspect in which our partial knowledge, so far from weakening the grounds of religious worship,

[1] Limits of Rel. Thought, Lect. iv.

has a tendency to strengthen them. If there were an absolute ignorance of God, there could be no worship at all; if there were an absolute knowledge, we should be the equals of God, and consequently free from all obligation to worship. It is our dependence, marking us out as finite beings, which renders us creatures of religion. It is this which gives rise to prayer, to gratitude, to obligation, to trust and to duty. Religion cannot be predicated of the infinite and self-sufficient. It is the characteristic of the rational and intelligent creature. Those finite symbols under which God is represented to us, and thought by us, furnish just the intimations of His character which are suited to be the basis of reverence and love. He is our Creator, our Redeemer, our Benefactor, our Ruler and our Judge. He is wise and powerful and good. He is faithful, merciful and just. These are the attributes which inspire confidence, and these are the relations under which religious affections are elicited and fostered. But if we should stop at the finite symbols, our religion would degenerate into earthly forms. We should love God as we love a man, and reverence His character as we honour a superior. Hence, to complete the notion of religious worship we must introduce the other element of our knowledge, in which God is negatively presented as transcending the capacity of thought. It is only as we believe that He is independent of all limitations and conditions—that He is self-sufficient, unchangeable and eternal, that the heart can freely go out to Him with the fullness of its homage. There is no limit upon our affections when the object is known to be unlimited in its right and fitness to receive them. The very darkness which shrouds this infinitude reacts upon our worship, and expands our emotions into rapture and adoration. An awful sense of sublimity, grandeur and majesty is awakened in the soul. The ground on which we tread becomes holy ground; we are constrained to take the shoes from our feet, and stand in wondering awe as we gaze upon the glory of the Lord.

Our partial knowledge strengthens all the grounds of worship.

Separate from God the finite images in which we clothe His perfections, and there would be nothing to justify or regulate our worship. Restrict Him to these finite appearances, and there would be nothing to warrant the peculiar condition of mind which we call religion. Combine the two elements together, and you have the object upon which the soul can pour forth all its treasures, and feel itself exalted in the very act of paying homage. The positive element of our knowledge provides the basis for extending to God our human affections; the negative element transforms those affections into a sublimer offering than any creature would be authorized to receive. A finite superior may be admired; only an infinite God can be adored. "I love God," says Gregory Nazianzen, "because I know Him. I adore Him because I cannot comprehend Him." "What we deny of God," says the venerable John Owen, "we know in some measure, but what we affirm we know not; only we declare what we believe and adore." We have light enough to see that the object is transcendently glorious, and when it passes beyond our vision into regions of illimitable excellence, where we have no faculties to pursue it, we are only the more profoundly impressed with the exceeding riches of its glory. It is the very light of eternity which darkens time. It is the brilliancy of the blaze which dazzles and confounds us. My ignorance of God, therefore, in the partial glimpses which I get of Him is only a stronger argument for loving Him. If what I see is so inexpressibly sublime and worthy—and what I see is only a point compared with what I do not see—surely I should have no fears, no hesitation or reluctance in surrendering myself unreservedly and for ever to Him whose name is only a synonym for the plenitude of glory. How admirably is our knowledge adapted to the ends of religion! He who would quarrel with the present arrangement could never be content unless God should seat him as an equal upon His throne, for as long as he remains finite he can have no

other kind of knowledge, however it may differ in degree from that which he now enjoys.

This view of our knowledge of God agreeable to Scripture.

The account which has been given of the nature and extent of our knowledge of God is in perfect harmony with the teaching of Scripture. "In no respect," says Mansel,[1] "is the theology of the Bible, as contrasted with the mythologies of human invention, more remarkable than in the manner in which it recognizes and adapts itself to that complex and self-limiting constitution of the human mind which man's wisdom finds so difficult to acknowledge. To human reason the personal and the infinite stand out in apparently irreconcilable antagonism; and the recognition of one in a religious system almost inevitably involves the sacrifice of the other. The Personality of God disappears in the Pantheism of India; His infinity is lost sight of in the Polytheism of Greece. In the Hebrew Scriptures, on the contrary, throughout all their variety of books and authors, one method of Divine teaching is constantly manifested, appealing alike to the intellect and to the feelings of man. From first to last we hear the echo of that first great commandment: 'Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.' God is plainly and uncompromisingly proclaimed as the One and the Absolute: 'I am the first, and I am the last: and beside me there is no God.' Yet this sublime conception is never for an instant so exhibited as to furnish food for that mystical contemplation to which the Oriental mind is naturally so prone. On the contrary, in all that relates to the feelings and duties by which religion is practically to be regulated, we cannot help observing how the Almighty, in communicating with His people, condescends to place Himself on what may, humanly speaking, be called a lower level than that on which the natural reason of man would be inclined to exhibit Him. While His personality is never suf-

[1] Limits of Rel. Thought, Lect. v.

fered to sink to a merely human representation—while it is clearly announced that His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways—yet His infinity is never for a moment so manifested as to destroy or weaken the vivid reality of those human attributes under which He appeals to the human sympathies of His creature. 'The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.' He will listen to our supplications; He will help those that cry unto Him; He reserveth wrath for His enemies; He is appeased by repentance; He showeth mercy to them that love Him. As a King, He listens to the petitions of His subjects; as a Father, He pitieth His own children. It is impossible to contemplate this marvellous union of the human and Divine, so perfectly adapted to the wants of the human servant of a Divine Master, without feeling that it is indeed the work of Him who formed the spirit of man and fitted him for the service of his Maker. 'He showeth His Word unto Jacob, His statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; neither have the heathen knowledge of His laws.'"

"But if this is the lesson taught us by that earlier manifestation in which God is represented under the likeness of human attributes, what may we learn from that later and fuller revelation which tells us of One who is Himself both God and man? The Father has revealed Himself to mankind under human types and images, that He may appeal more earnestly and effectually to man's consciousness of the human spirit within him. The Son has done more than this: He became for our sakes very man, made in all things like unto His brethren; the Mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Herein is our justification if we refuse to aspire beyond those limits of human thought in which he has placed us. Herein is our answer if any man would spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit. Is it irrational to contemplate God under symbols drawn from the human consciousness? Christ is our pattern, for 'in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.' Is it un-

philosophical that our thoughts of God should be subject to the law of time? It was when the fullness of time was come God sent forth His Son. Does the philosopher bid us strive to transcend the human, and to annihilate our own personality in the presence of the infinite? The Apostle tells us to look forward to the time when we shall 'all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' Does human wisdom seek, by some transcendental form of intuition, to behold God as He is in His infinite nature; repeating in its own manner the request of Philip, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us?' Christ Himself has given the rebuke and the reply: 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, then, Show us the Father?' "

Consequences of the principle herein illustrated:

The principle which we have endeavoured to illustrate, touching the limits of human knowledge in relation to Divine things, is pregnant with important consequences.

It shows that there is no such thing as a science of God.

1. In the *first* place, it conclusively shows that there can be no such thing as a science of God. We can hardly use the terms without the suspicion of blasphemy. Were such a science possible, it would lay bare the whole field of existence; it would reveal the nature of creation; the relation of the finite and the infinite in all the points of their contact; and the inmost essence of things. It would be the very knowledge which God has Himself. But if we are restricted to appearances, or to the relative manifestations of realities, our science, at best, can be but the result of multiplied comparisons, and can hardly extend beyond the order and succession of phenomena. Real being, as it exists in itself, or in relation to the Divine mind, must remain an impenetrable secret. We have to assume it as a fact, but we can neither explain nor conceive it. We cannot make it a term in logic, and reason from an analysis of its contents. Science can go no farther than observation can accumulate its facts.

The inexplicable must always be of larger extent than the simple and comprehensible. As, then, the limits of human thought encounter mysteries in every department of nature—mysteries which we are obliged to accept, though they defy every effort to reduce or overcome them; as matter is a mystery, mind is a mystery, substance is a mystery, power is a mystery—surely we must expect nothing less than mysteries when we enter the sphere of the infinite. God is, indeed, the great incomprehensible. As the principle of all things, if we could comprehend Him we should in Him comprehend everything besides. As the sum, therefore, of all incomprehensibility, whenever we touch His Being or venture to scrutinize His purposes and plans we must expect clouds and darkness to be round about His throne. A theology which has no mysteries; in which everything is level to human thought, and capable of being reduced to exact symmetry in a human system; which has no facts that command assent while transcending the province of human speculation, and contains no features which stagger the wisdom of human conceit;—a system thus thoroughly human is a system which is self-condemned. It has no marks of God upon it. For His footsteps are on the sea, and His paths in the great waters, and His ways past finding out. There is no searching of His understanding. Such a system would be out of harmony with that finite world in which we have our place. For there mystery encompasses us behind and before—in the earth, the air, the sea and all deep places, and especially in the secrets of our own souls. Man lives and breathes and walks amid mystery in this scene of phenomena and shadows, and yet he would expect no mystery in that grand and real world of which this is only a dim reflection!

It points out the real cause of most heresies.

2. In the *next* place, this principle suggests the real cause of most of the errors in theology, and the real solution of its most perplexing problems.

Most heresies have risen from believing the serpent's lie,

that our faculties were a competent measure of universal truth. We reason about God as if we possessed an absolute knowledge. The consequence is, we are lost in confusion and error. We assume the infinite in our words and think the finite in our minds; and the conclusion can only be a contradiction or a falsehood. The Unitarian professes to understand the Infinite Personality of God, and rejects the doctrine of the Holy Trinity with a smile of contempt. He forgets meanwhile that his argument has only proved that there cannot be three human persons in the same numerical essence. He has quietly eliminated the very element which, for aught he knows or can show, redeems the doctrine from all reasonable objection. Until he can tell us *what* the Infinite is, we need not listen to him while he undertakes to inform us *how* the Infinite is. It is so easy to slide into the habit of regarding the infinite and finite as only different degrees of the same thing, and to reason from one to the other with the same confidence with which, in other cases, we reason from the less to the greater, that the caution cannot be too much insisted on that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor God's ways our ways. To treat the power which creates and the human power which moves a foreign body as the same thing; to apply to creation the laws and conditions which limit the mechanisms of man; to represent the infinite as only a higher degree of human knowledge; and to restrict each to the same essential conditions and modifications, is to make man God, or God man—a fundamental falsehood, which must draw a fruitful progeny in its train.

It solves the most perplexing problems of Theology.

3. Our ignorance of the Infinite is the true solution of the most perplexing problems which encounter us at every step in the study of Divine truth. We have gained a great point when we have found out that they are really insoluble—that they contain one element which we cannot understand, and without which the whole must remain an inexplicable mystery. The doctrines of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the Pre-

science of God and the Liberty of Man, the Permission of the Fall, the Propagation of Original Sin, the Workings of Efficacious Grace, all these are facts which are clearly taught; as facts they can be readily accepted, but they defy all efforts to reduce them to science. Their feet rest upon the earth, but their head is lost in the clouds. Our wisdom is to believe and adore. The limits of human knowledge are a sufficient proof that thought is not commensurate with existence; that there are things which the very laws of thought compel us to accept, when it is impossible to reduce them into the forms of thought; that the conceivable is not the standard of the real; that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

It is a great lesson when man has learned the enormity of his ignorance. True wisdom begins in humility, and the first dictate of humility is not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.

LECTURE V.

THE NAMES OF GOD.

AMONG the methods which the Scriptures employ to answer the question concerning the nature and perfections of God is the use of personal and attributive names.

Not like proper names among men.

These names, unlike proper names among men, not only serve to denote the object and to make it a subject of predication in thought, but they also signify, or, in the language of the schools, *connote*, the qualities by which the object is distinguished. They are not unmeaning marks, discriminating one individual from another, as if by an arbitrary sign, but, like general terms, they are expressive of concepts which are realized only in God. They are applied to Him because they contain a meaning which suits Him. They were assumed in condescension to our weakness, that we might be assisted in coming to a knowledge of His being and His character. They are a part of God's plan of teaching the race, as it is through the explanation of names in which the sum of human attainment is recorded and preserved that the parent and teacher develop the opening faculties of the child, and stimulate and encourage its expanding curiosity. In relation to those which are not attributive, their very employment as proper names to designate a definite object of thought has obscured the connotation on account of which they were originally selected. They have ceased, in a great measure, to answer any other end than to single out the Deity as the subject of predication. They express Him

Part of God's plan of teaching our race.

as a whole, and not under any particular aspect. We must trace them to their origin if we would understand the precise share they have contributed in the gradual progress of revelation to the Christian concept of God. Each has played a part in the production of the general result, and it is curious as well as instructive to trace the successive steps by which God has progressively unfolded Himself in new aspects and relations to the human mind, until it has reached its present relative maturity of knowledge. Many streams have discharged their contents into a common reservoir, and it is remarkable that as the reservoir has increased in quantity the number of tributaries has been diminished. The Hebrew, the earliest language of revelation, was quite copious in its names of God. The Greek, the next and only other language, with the exception of a very limited use of the Chaldee, employed by inspiration, has but two terms to designate the Divine Being as a total object of thought. And yet these two terms contain the fullness of the Hebrew vocabulary. When the idea was in process of being formed and matured there were many concurrent elements which were specially marked and distinguished. When the idea was fully completed, or as fully as the limits of human thought will allow, the elements were no longer distinguished from each other, but the object was thought in its collective unity as a whole. One or two comprehensive names include everything.

God has gradually unfolded Himself.

The names diminish in number as the revelation advances.

Jerome,[1] following the computation of the Jews, enumerates no less than ten names of God in Hebrew: "El, Elohim, Eloe, Sabaoth, Elion, Eser-Ieje, Adonai, Jah, Jehovah and Saddai." But Eloah and Elohim are evidently the same name in different numbers, one being singular and the other plural. Sabaoth is not a name itself, but only a descriptive epithet applied to other names of God, particularly Jehovah. It is usually translated *hosts*,

[1] Epist. ad Marcell. de Decem Nom.

and seems to be a compendious expression for the universal dominion of God. The Lord of Hosts is the Lord of all worlds and of all their inhabitants. Three others in the list are probably variations of one and the same name—Jehovah, Ehyeh and Jah. The two most important designations of God which occur in the Hebrew Scriptures are unquestionably ELOHIM and JEHOVAH. These are the most common and the most complete. They seem to contain within themselves every attribute which every other title connotes, and are consequently rendered, and rendered very properly, by *Θεός* and *κύριος* in Greek. The use of them in the Pentateuch is very remarkable.[1] There are (*a*) sections in which the name Elohim either exclusively or predominantly obtains; (*b*) there are sections, again, in which the name Jehovah is the exclusive or predominant one; (*c*) there are other sections in which the names are promiscuously used; and then (*d*) there are others in which no name of God appears at all. From the seventh chapter of Exodus onward, with two or three exceptions, the name Elohim almost entirely disappears.

Two of the Hebrew names predominant.

(*a*.) The sections in which the name Elohim prevails are—1. From the beginning of the first chapter of Genesis to the third verse of the second—the account of the creation. 2. The fifth chapter of Genesis—the generations of Adam, with the exception of the twenty-ninth verse. 3. The sixth chapter, from the ninth to the twenty-second verse—the generations of Noah. 4. The seventh chapter, from the ninth to the twenty-fourth verse—the entrance into the ark, except that in the sixteenth verse the name Jehovah appears. 5. The eighth chapter, to the nineteenth verse—the end of the flood. 6. The ninth chapter, to the seventeenth verse—the covenant with Noah. 7. The seventeenth chapter—the institution of circumcision. Here also the name Jehovah appears in the first verse. 8. The twentieth chapter—

Elohim sections.

[1] Delitzsch, Com. Gen. Einleit, p. 30. Conf. note, p. 63, the substance of which is given in the text.

Sarah's deliverance from Abimelech. Here again Jehovah is found in the eighteenth verse. 9. The twenty-first chapter, to the twenty-first verse—the birth of Isaac and the sending away of Ishmael. Jehovah here again appears in the first verse. 10. The twenty-first chapter, from the twenty-second to the twenty-fourth verse — Abraham's league with Abimelech. In the thirty-third verse we have Jehovah again. 11. The twenty-fifth chapter, to the eighteenth verse—the sons of Keturah, Abraham's death and the generations of Ishmael. The word, however, occurs but once in all this section. 12. From the forty-sixth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter to the ninth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter—Jacob's dismission to Haran, and Esau's marriage. We have Elohim once and El-Shaddai once. 13. The thirty-first chapter—Jacob's departure from Laban, with the exception of the third and the forty-ninth verses, in which we have Jehovah. 14. Chapter thirty-third—Jacob's return home. 15. Chapter thirty-fifth—Jacob's journey to Bethel. 16. From chapter forty to chapter fifty—the history of Joseph in Egypt. In the eighteenth verse of chapter forty-nine we have Jehovah. 17. The first and second chapters of Exodus—Israel's oppression in Egypt and the first preparation for deliverance.

With Elohim is interchanged in these sections El-Shaddai and El; in connections, such as El-Elohe-Israel (chap. xxxiii. 20), or by itself alone (chap. xxxv. 1, 3), and only once Adonai (chap. xx. 4).

Jehovah sections.

(*b.*) The sections in which the name Jehovah prevails are—1. From Genesis, second chapter, fourth verse, to third chapter, twenty-fourth verse—the beginning of the history of man. 2. Chapter fourth—the history of the first seed of the woman. 3. Chapter sixth, from the first to the eighth verse—the increasing corruption before the flood. 4. Chapter seventh, from the first to the eighth verse—entrance into the ark. 5. Chapter eighth, from the twentieth to the twenty-second verse—Noah's altar and Jehovah's blessing. 6. Chap-

ter ninth, from the eighteenth to the twenty-ninth verse—Noah's prophecy of the nations. 7. Chapter tenth—the table of original settlements. 8. Chapter eleventh, from the first to the ninth verse—the confusion of tongues. 9. Chapter twelfth, from the first to the ninth verse—Abram's journey to Canaan upon Jehovah's call. 10. Chapter twelfth, from the tenth to the twentieth verse—Abram in Egypt. 11. Chapter thirteenth—Abram's separation from Lot. 12. Chapter fifteenth—Abram's faith and covenant-offering. 13. Chapter sixteenth—Ishmael's birth, Hagar's flight and return. 14. Chapter eighteenth—Jehovah's visit to Abraham in his tent. 15. Chapter nineteenth—the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Lot's last history. 16. Chapter twenty-fourth—Isaac's marriage. 17. Chapter twenty-fifth, from the nineteenth to the twenty-sixth verse—the birth of the twins. 18. Chapter twenty-sixth—Isaac's sorrows and comforts. 19. Chapter twenty-seventh, first forty verses—transition of the birth-right to Jacob. 20. Chapter thirtieth, from the twenty-fifth to the forty-third verse—a new covenant between Jacob and Laban. 21. Chapter thirty-eighth—the birth of Pharez and Zarah. 22. Chapter thirty-ninth—Jehovah with Joseph in Potiphar's house and in prison. 23. Exodus, chapter fourth, from the eighteenth to the thirty-first verse—the return of Moses to Egypt. 24. Exodus, chapter fifth—Pharaoh's rough treatment of the messengers of Jehovah.

In these sections, from Genesis, second chapter, fourth verse, to end of chapter third, the name Jehovah-Elohim is the prevailing usage, a combination which occurs only once more (Ex. ix. 30) in the whole Pentateuch. The name Elohim occurs in this section only in the mouth of the serpent and the woman. The exceptions to the universal use of Jehovah in the other sections are very few. The word Adonai most frequently interchanges with Jehovah, but it is always used in the form of a compellation or address. (Gen. xviii. 3, 27, 30, 31, 32; xix. 18.) The combination Adonai-Jehovah is characteristic of Deuteronomy. It is

found in Genesis, fifteenth chapter, verses second and eighth, and, with the exceptions of the passages in Deuteronomy, occurs nowhere else in the Pentateuch. As in the Elohim sections that title interchanges with El, so in the Jehovah sections that title interchanges with Adonai. The title Adonai, however, is used by Abimelech in one of the Elohim sections.

(*c.*) The sections in which Jehovah and Elohim are promiscuously used are Genesis, fourteenth chapter—Abram's battle with the four kings; twenty-second chapter, first nineteen verses—the offering up of Isaac; twenty-eighth chapter, from the tenth to the twenty-second verse—Jacob's dream at Bethel; from chapter twenty-ninth, verse thirty-first, to chapter thirtieth, verse twenty-fourth—the birth and naming of the sons of Jacob. Another section (Gen. xxxii.) in the beginning and end is *Elohimish*, and in the middle *Jehovish*. In Exodus, from the third chapter, first verse, to the fourth chapter, seventeenth verse—the call of Moses—besides the name Jehovah, Elohim, with the article, occurs eight times.

Sections, where used promiscuously.

(*d.*) The sections in which no name of God appears at all are Gen. xi. 10–32; xxii. 20–24; xxiii.; xxv. 27–34; xxvii. 41–45; xxix. 1–30; xxxiv.; xxxvi.; xxxvii.

Sections, where not used at all.

It would seem, from such an extent and variety of usage, that it would be easy to discriminate the precise shades of meaning by which these names are distinguished from each other. But it must be confessed, after all the efforts of elaborate ingenuity, that a steady and uniform distinction is by no means kept up. There are numerous passages in which no reason can be given for the use of one in preference to the other. It is impossible to explain, for example, as Delitzsch has remarked,[1] why in all the sections—Gen. vi. 9–22, ix. 1–17, xx. 1–17, xxxv.—the name Jehovah is nowhere used.

The use is often indiscriminate,

[1] Comment. Gen. Einleit., p. 32.

If it were declined by design, we are unable to detect the nature of the motive. The truth is, both names were reverenced and honoured as full and complete designations of God. They denoted the same object, and denoted it in the integrity of its attributes. Hence it was often a matter of indifference which was employed. The writer consulted his taste, and used sometimes one and sometimes the other, merely to give an agreeable variety to his style. Where there was no danger of ambiguity there was no need of special caution in the selection of his terms.

because both names are complete designations.

But still there are passages in which the use is the evident result of design; and it is in these passages, assisted by the etymology of the words, that we are to seek for their true, original connotation.

I begin with ELOHIM, because that is the first name of God which appears in the Hebrew Bible. It is the title under which He is described as the Creator of the world. It was Elohim who called into being the heavens and the earth—who spake light into existence, and separated the day from the night. It was He who stretched out the firmament; collected the waters; upraised the dry land; and who peopled the earth with all its variety of plants and animals. It was He who studded the sky with stars, and appointed the seasons of the earth. It was He who made man in His own Divine image. We cannot but think that the selection of this term in the account of creation was a matter of design. There must have been a peculiar fitness in it to express the relation of the Creator to His works. We pass through the work of the days until we come to the origin of man. There the Elohim appears as not only one, but as also plural. He seems to be in consultation with Himself: "Let *us* make man, in *our* image, after *our* likeness." The noun, too, is in the plural number; and while its concord with singular verbs indicates unity, its plural form indicates plurality. These are all facts which lie upon the surface.

ELOHIM.

Expresses the trine Personality.

The first inference which I draw is that this word by its very form is intended to express the trine Personality of God. It is the name of the Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The consultation in Genesis i. 26 cannot be consistently explained upon any other hypothesis. That alone is enough to set aside the notion of a *pluralis majestaticus*, or a *pluralis intensionis*. Then, again, we find that the work of creation is promiscuously ascribed to each Person of the blessed Godhead. It was, in fact, the work of the Trinity. If this is a clear and indisputable truth, we should interpret the narrative in Genesis in conformity with its light. Thus far, I think, the ground is firm beneath us. When the great God is first announced to us, He is announced to us by a name which proclaims Him as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost—the God whom we adore, in the new creation, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the question now arises, Why has this particular word been selected to reveal this mystery? What special significancy, apart from this personal allusion, does it contain? Here I confess myself perplexed. Among the conflicting etymologies which have been proposed, there are only two which seem to me worthy of serious consideration. The *first* is that which derives it from אָלָה, *alah* in the Arabic signification of the root, *to reverence, to worship, to adore*. According to this etymology, it is applied to the Trinity as the sole object of religious worship. The God who exists in these three Persons is the only being to whom we are at liberty to direct our prayers or our praises. We are His, for He made us, and we are bound to honour Him in His threefold subsistence; for in this mysterious relation He is infinitely worthy. Delitzsch takes the Arabic root in the sense of fear, and of a fear which deprives us of our self-possession. He supposes that it is applied, by a natural association, to the object which excites this fear; and pre-eminently to God, as the truly terrible one. But this exposition is liable to insur-

Two etymologies.

mountable objections. Such fear is not the normal relation betwixt a rational creature and God—it is the product only of sin; and such fear, so far from being acceptable worship, is utterly inconsistent with the genuine spirit of devotion. God presents Himself to us to be loved and trusted. He is only terrible to the workers of iniquity. The *other* etymology derives the word from אָלָה, *alah, to swear*, and represents the Trinity as engaged in an eternal covenant, which was ratified betwixt them by the solemnity of an oath. It is certain that the Son was constituted a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek by an oath. The council of peace was between them both, and reference is supposed to be had to this august transaction—a transaction which, in its historic accomplishment, unfolds, in full proportion, the glorious doctrine of the three in one—when God is introduced as erecting the stage upon which the historic fulfilment should take place. This, I think, is the real import of the name—the Trinity in covenant for man's redemption; and if this be so, it is very suggestive that the first title by which God proclaims Himself to our race should be a title of blessedness and grace. He appears in the old creation only as preparing the way for the new. He is God the Creator, that He may be also God the Redeemer.

The true import of Elohim.

The analogical application of this title to kings and magistrates is compatible with either etymology. If God is so called because He is the object of reverence and fear, then the intimation is that subjects are bound to treat their rulers with honour and respect. If the allusion is to the eternal covenant as ratified by an oath, then the implication is that magistrates are ministers of God, bound by an awful sanction to be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well. They are reminded that their authority is a sacred trust, and that their claim to the homage of their people depends upon the fidelity with which they discharge their duties. The people, too, are reminded of their duties, espe-

This title applicable to kings.

cially the duty of reverencing authority as an ordinance of God.

Cocceius adopts the derivation of Elohim from *alah, to swear*, but interprets the oath as the sign not of the Eternal Covenant betwixt the Persons of the Godhead, but of the covenant into which God enters with men in the dispensation of His grace. The reference, according to him, is to the promises of the gospel, and the faithfulness with which they shall certainly be fulfilled to all who believe. The predominant idea in this case, as in the other, is that of a God in covenant, so that this, however explained, may be taken as the fundamental meaning of the word.

JEHOVAH.

The next title of God which appears in the Pentateuch, and which is everywhere used with awful reverence, is the *tetragrammaton*, the four-lettered word, JEHOVAH. The Jews since the exile have ceased to pronounce it. The Talmud affirms that the angels in heaven dare not utter it, and denounces fearful vengeance upon the bold blasphemer who should attempt to profane it. But that the name was familiar to the patriarchs, that they were accustomed to the use of it, and knew of no superstition which converted it into a charm, is manifest from many passages of the Pentateuch. Eve repeats it without hesitation and alarm when she gives thanks that she had gotten a man from the Lord [Jehovah] (Gen. iv. 1). In the days of Enos it is expressly said that then men began to call upon the name of the Lord [Jehovah]. Between Bethel and Hai, Abram is said to have pitched his tent, to have built an altar, and to have called upon the name of the Lord [Jehovah] (Gen. xii. 8, conf. Gen. xiii. 4; xiv. 22; xxvii. 16). It is the angel of the Lord [Jehovah] who appears to Hagar, predicts the future fortunes of her son and sends her back to her mistress (Gen. xvi. 7–14). It would be tedious to quote the passages all through the patriarchal history which abundantly and conclusively show that the fathers

Jewish superstition.

The patriarchs used the name.

were familiar with this august and glorious name. They used it in their solemn worship and in their religious transactions with one another.

Exodus vi. 2, 3 interpreted.

The Jewish superstition seems to derive some countenance from the memorable passage, Ex. vi. 2, 3: "And God spake unto Moses and said unto him, I am the Lord [Jehovah], and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." The correct interpretation of this passage will give us the key to the precise aspects of His character in which God would be contemplated under the name Jehovah. The meaning is, not that the name was unknown to them, but that there was something in the name which they had not yet been in a condition to realize. It contained a virtue, the efficacy of which they had not previously experienced, but which they were now about to be privileged to witness. To appreciate the force of this observation, we must distinguish betwixt the absolute meaning of the word, and the relation of that meaning to the children of Israel. Absolutely, and in itself, it expresses the essential nature of God, as the One, the Infinite, the Eternal and the Unconditioned. It is a synonym for all those perfections which transcend the capacity of thought, and mark God out as the only true Existence in the universe—the ὄντως ὄν. It is derived from the substantive verb *to be;* it is, indeed, the third person future of that verb, and literally signifies *he is* or *will be.* When God applies it to Himself, without relation to the manner in which a third person would speak of Him, He uses the first person, and says, אֶהְיֶה, *Ehyeh, I am,* or *I will be;* or, אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה, *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, I am what I am,* or *I am what I will be.* It is equivalent to the "*Who was, who is, and who is to come,*" or "*shall be,*" of the New Testament. It expresses the absolute plenitude of being, an *esse* in which, to use the language of Cocceius, there is no *deesse.* It includes eternity, self-existence, immutability, simplicity, omnipotence,

omniscience, and, in short, the consummation of all possible perfections. It means, in brief, the entire essence of God as He is in Himself.

All this the patriarchs knew. But this absolute being presents Himself, in this title, under a special relation to His people. It implies that what He is in Himself He will be to them, according to the measure of their capacity. From the fullness that is in Him they shall receive and receive abundantly, even grace for grace. His Jehovahship is the pledge of the absolute fulfilment of all His promises. He is all, and therefore can become all, to those who fear Him. Hence to call Himself Jehovah is to proclaim the stability of His covenant, and to pawn His very existence in proof that He will become, and that from Himself, the satisfying portion of His saints. It was this relation, most precious and interesting, of the Absolute to us, which the fathers had not yet fully apprehended. They knew God as the Author of blessings, but the relation of those blessings to Himself—the fact that it was He in the blessing that constituted its value—this great idea had not taken possession of their souls. They had not learned that God was in all that He freely gave, and that it was only as He was in it that the gift was really worth receiving. Hence this is precisely the name which suits God as a Saviour and Redeemer. It exactly represents the relations of the Son when He became flesh, gave Himself a ransom for our sins, and becomes to us, by a mysterious but glorious union, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. We are in Him and He in us. We are because He is, and because He lives we shall live also.

This title not transferable to any creature.

Hence, from the nature of the case this name cannot be analogically transferred to any creature, however eminent or exalted. No creature can communicate as from Himself. He can only give what he receives. His sufficiency is from God. But the peculiarity of Jehovah is, that He gives what is His own. He is life, and therefore imparts it. He is

holiness, and therefore infuses it. He is blessedness, and therefore communicates it. He is salvation, and therefore bestows it. All that he promises He is, and therefore His promises are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. It is this relation of the Absolute to the creature that constitutes the peculiar significancy of the name of Jehovah. And, therefore, in a different sense, we may adopt the language of the Jew, and pronounce this to be a glorious and an ineffable name. It is a name at which devils may well tremble, for it reveals the unutterable depths of their poverty, while saints and angels tremble and adore. This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

The application of this name to Jesus Christ, which the writers of the New Testament do not scruple to make, is a pregnant and unanswerable proof of His absolute divinity.

Full import of it only in Jesus Christ.

Indeed it is only in Jesus Christ that the full import of this name is or can be realized to us. Here and here alone is Jehovah, as Jehovah, known by the rich experience of the heart.

If this exposition be correct, there was a peculiar propriety when God was about to appear as the Redeemer of Israel in His appearing under this name. It revealed Him as an object of assured and steadfast faith. There is also a propriety in the prominence which is given to it when the sacred writers leave the history of the world at large, and confine their narratives for the most part to the fortunes of God's redeemed people—His Church. There is also an exquisite beauty in God's appearing under the name Jehovah when He summons the guilty pair into His presence, and comforts them in their sorrow under the prospect of a great Deliverer. There is also a peculiar force and emphasis in the combination Jehovah-Elohim, as condensing the entire sum of the relations in which the creature can stand to God.

Jah.

The third name, Jah, is generally regarded as an abbreviated form of Jehovah. Like it, it is exclusively appropriated to the Supreme God.

It is peculiar to poetry, and especially the poetry of praise. Its combination with Jehovah might seem incompatible with the notion that it is simply an abridgment of the same word. Coccceius derives it from the word יָאָה, *yaah*, in the sense of *decency* and *fitness;* and in this sense it expresses the harmony, beauty and glory of the Divine perfections. It is the affirmation that God is, in all respects, like Himself, and the absolute standard of all that is becoming and beautiful in the creature. According to this exposition, it represents God in that very aspect of His being which renders Him the object of our praise. It is, in other words, a compendious expression for His unutterable beauty, and is fitly joined with *hallelu*, as an exhortation to praise the Lord.

Adonai.

Adonai, pointed with a *quametz*, is also a name exclusively applied to God. It implies sovereign dominion, and is equivalent to Lord and Master. It implies a dominion, however, which is founded in *ownership*, and is therefore peculiarly appropriate to God, whether we contemplate Him as Creator or Redeemer. We are His, for He made us, and we belong pre-eminently to Christ, for He has bought us with His own precious blood. This is the word which the Jews substitute for Jehovah wherever Jehovah occurs in the sacred text.

Shaddai.

Shaddai, sometimes preceded by El, sometimes alone, is a term by which God is represented as *Almighty and Supreme.* It is rendered by the Septuagint παντοκράτωρ. It is plural in its form, possibly to express the intensity and fullness of the Divine power.

El.

El, derived from אוּל, *aul*, or from אַיִל, *ayl*, properly signifies the *Strong One.* Used absolutely and in the singular, it is restricted universally to the true God. It represents Him as irresistible in His purposes, vanquishing all obstacles, subduing all enemies, and bringing His own purposes to pass.

Elyon.

Elyon, from עָלָה, *alah*, to *ascend*, is properly an adjective with a superlative sense, and describes God as the Most High ; or the High and Lofty

One who inhabiteth eternity. It is equivalent to the ὕψιστος of the Greeks. It simply reveals, by an easy and obvious figure, the absolute supremacy of God.

These are the names by which the nature and perfections of God are compendiously set forth in the Old Testament. There are many other titles which designate special relations, such as *Judge* and *Lawgiver*, but these can in no sense be regarded as proper names.

Two Greek titles answering to Elohim and Jehovah.

In Greek we have θεός and κύριος, which, whatever may have been the original ground of their use, now denote the Supreme Jehovah, and signify at the same time the sum of His perfections, and of the essential relations in which He stands to His creatures. The fundamental notion in κύριος, *Lord*, is certainly that of power and of rightful dominion; but, in the Septuagint and New Testament it is made synonymous with Jehovah, and must consequently be taken in the full sense of that glorious name. The fundamental notion of θεός, *God*, may be that of the Arranger—God as the author of the beauty and order in the Universe; but the Septuagint has made it equivalent to Elohim, and we are to employ it in no more restricted sense. Indeed, it was the only strictly proper name among the Greeks for the supreme and everlasting God.

These Divine names served a most important purpose among the patriarchs in recording, preserving and giving unity to their knowledge of God. They could hardly have been dispensed with. The concept of an earthly object requires a sign to hold its elements together; much more does such a concept as that of God. We see the value of names in the instruction of children. It is through the explanation of words that they are slowly and progressively conducted to the knowledge of things. How graciously has God condescended, in the revelation of Himself, to our weakness and our faculties!

LECTURE VI.

THE NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

WHEN we come to a closer determination of the nature and attributes of God, we encounter the question, Whether there is any sense in which He can be defined? That no human language can represent Him as He is in Himself is perfectly obvious from the fact, that no human thought can conceive Him in His infinite and absolute essence. Here, in the words of the venerable Cyril of Jerusalem,[1] our highest knowledge is to confess our ignorance. The very notion, moreover, of defining the infinite, seems to involve a contradiction. To define is to limit, to determine, to restrict; but the infinite must cease to be infinite in coming under these conditions of human thought. As it exists in itself, therefore, it is manifestly indefinable. Add to this, that God transcends all the distinctions of Logic which definition presupposes. He is neither genus nor species. Intensely and exclusively singular, He stands alone in His being; there are none on earth to be compared with Him, none in heaven to be ranked with Him. "To whom then will we liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?"[2]

God indefinable,

But the case is different in relation to our own finite conceptions. These, though inadequate to represent God, may themselves be adequately represented in language. If we cannot answer the question, what God is in Himself, we can certainly answer the question, what God is as He appears to us. We

but we can express our finite conceptions of Him.

[1] Catechis., vi. 2.

[2] Isa. xl. 18.

can combine our knowledge and our faith in the terms of a description which, though not conformable with the laws, may answer all the ends of a logical definition. Our analogical concepts we can refer to a genus, and this genus we can distinguish by the properties which we know and believe to be essential to God. We think the Divine, as we do every other being, under the relation of substance and attribute; the substance being determined by the attributes, and the attributes conceived as manifestations of the substance. When asked, *Quid sit?* we answer in terms descriptive of the substance; when asked, *Qualis sit?* we answer in terms descriptive of the attributes. In conformity with this view various definitions have been given of God. Some define Him as the absolutely perfect being —*being* the genus; and *absolutely perfect*, the specific difference. But the difficulty here is that no positive knowledge is conveyed. We begin with a series of negations, and can never translate ourselves beyond the sphere of darkness in which we have placed ourselves. We confound a faith in an unknown reality with a positive determination of human thought. To this and all such definitions pretending to posit the essence of the absolute, the following remarks of Van Mastricht[1] are applicable: "This is no more a legitimate definition of God than to say of man, He is the most perfect sublunary being, would be a legitimate definition of him. And yet who would accept such a definition, or admit it as any real explication of the human essence? No more is that a genuine definition of God which simply represents Him as the absolutely perfect being. For neither the genus *being*, to which He is assigned, nor the difference, *absolutely perfect*, contains any real explication of His essence. Not *being*, for that rather proposes than explains it; affirms *that* it is, rather than *what* it is. Not *absolutely perfect*, because that seems to express a relation or comparison, by which the essence of God surpasses the essence of every other

We must conceive of God as substance and attributes.

A definition of God considered.

[1] Quoted in De Moor, cap. iv., § 11.

thing. Everything whatever, as long as it is, is a something perfect. Hence, by *perfection* simply, the essence of God cannot be accurately discriminated from the essence of any other thing. The addition of the qualifying epithet *absolutely*, only institutes a comparison, but determines nothing as to the nature of the things compared."

A second definition considered.

Perrone,[1] the distinguished professor of theology in the Jesuit College at Rome, makes the essence of God to consist in His independence and self-existence. According to him, an essence should always fulfil four conditions: 1. It should be something intrinsic to the thing; 2. It should distinguish it from every other thing; 3. It should be first in the order of thought when we undertake to conceive the thing; and, 4. It should be construed as the *fons et origo* of all its perfections. These conditions in relation to God, he maintains, are realized in the notion of self-existence. This, then, is the Divine essence. But what do we know of self-existence apart from the denial of a cause? What positive concept have we from which we can deduce any positive conclusion whatever? Just give to a man what he calls the notion of self-existence and nothing else—the mere negation of a cause—and what is he likely to achieve in the way of revealing the only true God of our worship? The negative can give nothing but the negative. Remove the manifestations which God has made of Himself in the works of creation and providence—remove the Scriptures, and leave us nothing but the naked concept of necessary being—and it seems to me intuitively obvious that it would be as barren of results as the baldest identical proposition. As regulative, in the sphere of positive thought, it is immensely important. But as a *fons et origo* of perfections, it is as sterile as the sands of Arabia.

We dismiss, therefore, as frivolous all efforts to represent the essence of God, *as thought*, in terms of the absolute. If we ascribe to Him any attributes at all, we are constrained

[1] Prælect. Theol., Pt. I., c. iii., prop. iii.

by the constitution of our nature to think Him as a substance or subject in which these attributes inhere. That substance must be determined by the nature of the attributes themselves. And as we know of but two substances, mind and matter, we are constrained to represent God under the analogy of one or the other, according as the manifestations in His works and the revelation of His word shall decide. He is either material or spiritual. Between these, so far as known to us, there is no middle; and which of these most fitly represents the nature of God is hardly susceptible of doubt.

We must think God to be a Spirit.

The best definition, in a brief compass, is that contained in the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly: *God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.* Here the genus to which the substance of God is referred is spirit, in strict accordance with the Scriptures and the manifestations of His nature which are made by His works; the difference, those qualities which belong to spirit in its full and normal development, heightened beyond all bounds of conception by terms which are borrowed from God as an object of faith. In this definition there is an admirable combination of what we know with what we are only able to believe, and God is represented in language precisely as He appears in thought. There is but one defect. It seems to me that the peculiar personality of God should have been distinctly and prominently announced. He is not only Spirit, but Personal Spirit, and not Personal barely, but Tri-personal—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. To describe Him as a Spirit subsisting in three Persons, and then as infinite, eternal and unchangeable in all the perfections which are proper to Spirit, is to make as near an approximation to an accurate definition as it is possible for our faculties to compass.[1] Spirit expresses the nature and answers the question, *Quid sit?*

The best definition.

But it is defective.

[1] Cf. De Moor, c. iv., § 12.

The properties express the perfections and answer the question, *Qualis sit?* One can only be thought as the correlative of the other. We know the nature, as a permanent, unchanging subject, only through the attributes by which it is revealed, and know it only as their ground and centre of unity.

Answer to the two questions.

The notion of attributes arises from the nature of the effects which we are constrained to ascribe to the agency of God. We know what He is by seeing what He does. We remark the traces of order and design which are everywhere conspicuous around us, and we immediately feel that the Author of the universe must be possessed of knowledge and wisdom. We listen to the teachings of our own consciences, and cannot but collect that He who compels us to distinguish in our own souls betwixt the right and the wrong is Himself a being of rectitude. The products of His will, in the mighty works of His hands which are everywhere displayed to view, are in the same way confessions of His power. Attributes, therefore, may be defined as the determinations of the Divine Being to human thought, suggested by the relations in which He stands to His works. They are the modes under which we conceive Him.

How we get our notions of God's attributes.

All the attributes of God are essential; that is, they are nothing separate and distinct from God, but God Himself manifested in such and such forms. The same may be said of the faculties of the human soul; they are not something distinct from the soul, and added to it as a complement to its being, but are only the soul itself existing in such and such modes of consciousness. We can logically discriminate betwixt essence and properties; and in every other being there are properties which may be conceived as detached from the essence, but in the case of God the essence and the properties completely coincide. He has no separable accidents. All that He is, He is essentially. The importance of this principle has been illustrated in the controversy with the

They are not separable from His essence.

Socinians, who were willing to acknowledge the Holy Ghost as an attribute of God, but were not willing to acknowledge Him as God.

Their being all radically one,

It is commonly maintained by divines not only that the attributes are not distinct from the essence, but that they are not really distinct from one another. They are all radically one. Wisdom, goodness, justice, power, anger, pity, love,—all these, as they exist in God, are really one and the same mode of consciousness. This conclusion is supposed to be necessitated by the doctrine of the simplicity of God. He is held to be absolved from every species of composition, physical, logical and metaphysical. He is not a whole made up of parts. He admits of no distinctions of genus and species, or of substance and quality. He is nakedly and absolutely one. There are and can be no differences or distinctions in His nature. It is said, accordingly, that if we ascribe to Him attributes really distinct from each other, each would be a different thing, and the unity of God, instead of being one, simple and indivisible, would be an aggregate or sum of different qualities. I can understand how the simplicity and unity of God absolve Him from physical and logical distinctions. I can understand that He is not composed of parts, like body, nor capable of being classed under genera and species, but I cannot understand why the metaphysical distinction of substance and quality is at all inconsistent with the most perfect simplicity. If all distinctions of every kind are to be excluded from the Godhead, how is it possible to reconcile the doctrine of the Trinity with the absolute unity of the Divine nature? The very core of the doctrine is that there are distinctions, and distinctions in the essence of the Godhead without which there would and could be no God at all. The truth is, absolute simplicity is to us wholly unintelligible; it is only the negation of every form of composition. But when every form of composition

said to be demanded by God's unity.

Reply to this statement from the doctrine of the Trinity,

is removed, the positive thing that remains transcends our capacity of thought. We know not what it is, and it is idle to undertake to reason from it as if it were a positive element of knowledge.

To us the law of substance and quality is an intrinsic condition of existence, independently of which we are unable to think any object whatever; and as the law of human knowledge is that of plurality and difference, qualities must be presented as distinct manifestations of their substance, or they convey nothing to the mind. Absolute identity to beings constituted as we are would be as bootless as absolute nonentity. If the simplicity of the human soul is not disturbed or impaired by distinct modes of consciousness, if it continues permanently one in the midst of the many, I see no heresy in supposing that something analogous may obtain in the infinite being of God, and that He reconciles variety with unity, distinctions with simplicity, in a manner which does not detract from His absolute perfection.

and from the law of our own minds.

How the one in God appears as the many to us is explained by the distinction betwixt virtual or eminent and real difference. This distinction plays so important a part in theological treatises that I shall take this opportunity to explain it. Distinction or difference is the negation of identity. Things can differ either in themselves or in our modes of conceiving them. When they differ in themselves, the difference is said to be real. When the difference is only in our modes of conceiving, it is said to be virtual or eminent. The reason of the term is this: the thing, though one and simple in itself, in the manifold effects which it produces and the manifold relations in which it is thought, is construed as equivalent to them all, and as containing them in a higher form of perfection than that in which they are realized. A grain of wheat, for example, is one and simple in itself, but it may be conceived in various aspects and relations. It may be thought simply as a body, composed of

The distinction of eminent and real difference,

parts; it may be thought as an article of food; it may be thought merely as a seed. Here are three modes of conceiving the same thing, which yet abides in its unity. So God, absolutely simple in Himself, contains in Himself what is equivalent to all the effects He has produced. He is potentially all that He does. That is *eminently* in Him—that is, exists in the form of a higher perfection in Him—which is realized in the outward universe.[1]

applied to this question, and

It is maintained, accordingly, that while in the intrinsic relation of existence there is no real difference among the attributes of God, all being equally God Himself, in the extrinsic relations of working and manifestation differences emerge, but the differences are in the effects and not in the cause. As we conceive the cause, however, in relation to the effects, we

[1] ["Distinction or difference is the negation of identity. Things are distinguished which are not the same. A thing can be different from another, either in itself or in our conception. When different in itself, the distinction is called *real;* when only in our conception, it is called *rational or mental.*

"Things differ in themselves, either because they are separate, as Peter and Paul; or separable, as soul or body; or relatively opposed, as father and son. This species of distinction is called *realis major.* Things may differ solely as the mode differs from the thing modified, as figure and body, cogitation and mind. This distinction is called *modal,* or *distinctio realis minor.* To these John Duns Scotus added a third—namely, between two or more properties of the same thing, when they differ only in their formal reason, as in man, animality and rationality; in God, essence and attributes; and among the attributes themselves, as justice and mercy are formally distinguished. This was called *formal* difference or *distinctio realis minima.*

"Mental distinction is of two kinds—one purely arbitrary, as when we distinguish between Peter and Cephas, there being no foundation for the distinction in the thing itself, it is called *distinctio rationis ratiocinantis;* the other is when there is a foundation in the thing, which through one and absolutely simple in itself, is yet *equivalent* to many different things, and on account of the variety of its effects causes us to consider it in different aspects and relations, as a grain may be seed, food or body. So God, absolutely simple in Himself, produces different effects, and therefore contains in Himself what is equivalent to these effects, or rather superior to them—contains it *eminently.* The same thing in Him makes differences among the creatures. This is the *distinctio rationis ratiocinatæ,* or virtual difference."—*Perrone,* Pt. II., c. i.]

give it a different determination according to the nature of the effect. Knowledge and power, for example, in God are one and the same, but knowledge and power terminate in different effects, and the difference of determination given by these effects involves a corresponding difference in human conception. This difference, depending upon the difference of effect, and upon a corresponding difference in our mode of conceiving, is called a virtual or eminent difference.

If the extrinsic relations under which we think do not coincide with the intrinsic relations under which the attributes of God exist, it would seem that our knowledge is deceitful and illusive. To this it is replied, that the knowledge is real as far as it goes. It fails to tell us what God is in Himself; in that aspect he is wholly incomprehensible; but it does unfold to us His relations to the creature. These relations are real; and though they seem to reveal a manifold perfection in God, they are not delusive, so long as they reveal what is still higher and better than anything which can be conceived as many. Properly interpreted, the manifold in nature only teaches that there is that in God which is competent to produce it. He is eminently, in the resources of His being, all that the universe contains. As one, He gives rise to diversity, but the diversity is not in Him.

God shown to be One, without any diversity.

All this is ingenious, and to some extent intelligible, but is very far from being a satisfactory account of the distinction which we are constrained to make in the attributes of God. No juggling with scholastic technicalities can ever confound or fuse into one modes of consciousness so really distinct as those of intelligence and will. It may be that in the absolute they are reduced to unity, but it is perfectly certain that we cannot see how they are virtually the same. It may be that pity and justice completely coincide as they exist in God, but it is impossible for us to comprehend how the one is eminently the other. The true view is, that this whole subject transcends the sphere of our faculties. We can only

Ingenious, but not satisfactory.

obey the law of our nature; and the very determinations which lead us to ascribe any attributes to God lead us, at the same time, to distinguish them. The differences may be only apparent, but to us they must be construed as real until the delusion is detected. That, however, never can be done by abstract speculations on simplicity.

Classification of attributes necessary.

Seeing that we can know God only under the relation of distinct properties and attributes, it is important to adopt some comprehensive mode of classifying and arranging these manifestations of the Divine Being. In some treatises the method is simply synthetic—adding attribute to attribute as each is unfolded in the process of the argument. For instance, they set out with Being; the temporal and the contingent give the eternal and the necessary. Here are two predicates to be applied to the first being. Eternity implies immutability and infinity. Here are two other predicates. Through the traces of order and design the predicates of intelligence and goodness are collected; and so on through the whole list of the known attributes of God. Here there is no classification. There is simply a process of synthesis by means of a previous analysis. In this way the attributes are generally treated in works on Natural Theology.

Seven schemes of distribution signalized.

Among the schemes of distribution proposed by theologians the following divisions may be signalized: 1. Into Absolute and Relative. The Absolute embraces the perfections of God as out of relation to the creature; the Relative, the same perfections as in relation to the creature. "Thus," to use the illustration of De Moor, appropriated by Dr. Breckinridge,[1] "goodness would be considered an absolute attribute, while mercy would be considered a relative one, as being founded in goodness, but having a special relation to the creature; and in like manner immensity would be considered an absolute, and omnipresence a relative, attribute; holiness an absolute, and punitive justice a relative, attribute;

[1] Object. Theol., Book iii., c. xvii. Cf. De Moor, c. iv. § 19.

and so of the rest." 2. Into Positive and Negative. The Positive are those which can be affirmatively predicated of God—such as wisdom, goodness, justice; the Negative are those which can only be expressed by negations—such as infinity, eternity, immensity. 3. Into Quiescent and Active or Operative. The Quiescent coincide with what have been called the immanent perfections of God; the Operative, with the transient. 4. Into Primitive and Derivative—those from which others are derived, and those so derived. 5. Into Metaphysical, Physical, or Natural—for all these terms have been used to express the same class—and Moral, embracing those connected with intelligence and will. The first set of terms includes all the attributes of God considered simply as the infinite and absolute; the second, those which belong to Him as a Personal Spirit. The most common distribution is—6. Into Communicable and Incommunicable.[1] The Communicable refers to those of which some analogy can be found in the perfections of the creature; the Incommunicable, to those which admit of no such analogy. 7. Into Internal and External; "which division," says De Moor,[2] "is accommodated to the philosophy of Des Cartes, according to which the whole nature of God is resolved into mere cogitation, to the exclusion of everything else which, except thought, can be conceived. From this principle are deduced only two internal attributes of God—Intellect and Will; because there are only two general modes of thought—perception or the operation of intellect, and volition or the operation of will. Hence all the other attributes of God are considered merely as external denominations."

All these pervaded by a common vein of thought.

These distinctions, though variously expressed, are nearly all fundamentally the same. They are pervaded by a common vein of thought—a fact which cannot be explained without admitting that they have a real foundation in the nature of our knowledge of God. And yet the common idea which

[1] Howe, Principles, etc., Part i., Lect. 17. Turrett. Loc. iii., Qu. 6.
[2] Chap. iv., § 19.

pervades them has not been distinctly and consciously seized; otherwise the attributes would have been determined by it, and not by the aspects in which they happen to be contemplated. There is evidently this fundamental distinction between one of these classes and the other—that, in the one case, what are called attributes or properties are not specific determinations, but characteristics of every attribute and property manifested in the relation of God to His works. They are not a mode of consciousness or being, co-ordinate with other modes of consciousness or being. They are not related as memory and imagination in the human soul, but rather as consciousness—the universal condition of intelligence—to the whole soul. They are not expressive of particular forms of Divine agency, but are rather pervading conditions—if we may indulge the solecism—of the Divine existence. God is not wise and infinite, but He is infinite in His wisdom as well as in His being. What He is determinately to human thought, that He is infinitely, eternally and unchangeably. This is the distinction which all these divisions tacitly recognize. It is the absolute of faith transferred to the manifested and known. It is God as believed lying at the basis of all that is revealed, and never for a moment to be divorced from it. The one set of properties might therefore be called modes of being—the other, properties of nature or determinative properties. The one set may be referred to the fundamental notion of necessary existence, the other to the fundamental notion of a Personal Spirit. Around these two central points we may collect and arrange all that we can know of God. The first notion gives Eternity, Immensity, Independence, Immutability; the second gives Intelligence and Will, and all those perfections which are included in the idea of a perfect Spirit. Unity and Simplicity are included in both.

The fundamental distinction.

Communicable and *incommunicable* are terms very badly chosen to express the ideas which they were intended to convey. They seem to imply that the perfection in man is

an emanation from the corresponding perfection of God, or at least that the two are formally the same. But there is really nothing that is strictly common betwixt them but the word. They are analogous, but not alike. The relations are the same, but the things themselves differ as widely as the infinite and finite.

Classifications of Hodge,

Dr. Hodge, in the "Outlines of Theology,"[1] published by his son, has suggested a classification of the Divine attributes which coincides almost precisely with that which I have proposed. He makes four classes—"1. Those attributes which equally qualify all the rest: *Infinitude*, that which has no bounds; *Absoluteness*, that which is determined either in its being or modes of being or action by nothing whatsoever without itself. This includes immutability. 2. Natural attributes; God is an infinite *Spirit, self-existent, eternal, immense, simple, free of will, intelligent, powerful.* 3. Moral attributes. God is a Spirit infinitely *righteous, good, true* and *faithful.* 4. The consummate glory of all the Divine perfections in union—the beauty of HOLINESS."

and of Breckinridge.

Dr. Breckinridge, in his "Objective Theology," proposes a classification much more complicated and elaborate. It is developed in the seventeenth chapter of the work. A general view of it is contained in the summary of the closing section: "According to this method we are enabled to contemplate God successively—1. As He is an infinite Being, and endowed with the proper perfections thereof. 2. As He is an infinite Spirit, and endowed with the proper perfections thereof. 3. As being both, and endowed with all perfections that belong to both, considered with reference to the eternal and ineffaceable distinction between true and false, which is the fundamental distinction with which our own rational faculties are conversant. 4. As being endowed with all perfections with reference to the eternal and ineffaceable distinction between good and evil, which is the fundamental

[1] Page 104.

distinction with which our moral faculties are conversant. 5. As being endowed with all perfections which underlie, which embrace or which result from the union of all the preceding perfections. And so the classes of his perfections would necessarily be—1. Those called Primary Attributes—that is, such as belong to an infinite and self-existent Being, simply considered. 2. Essential Attributes—that is, those belonging to such a Being considered essentially as an infinite Spirit. 3. Natural Attributes—that is, such as appertain to an infinite Spirit, considered naturally, rather than morally or essentially. 4. Moral Attributes—that is, such as appertain to such a Being, considered morally, rather than naturally or essentially. 5. Consummate Attributes—that is, such as appertain to such a Being considered completely and absolutely."

It is obvious, in the *first* place, that the terms in which this classification is expressed are unhappily chosen. When we read of *Primary* Attributes, we expect to meet as a matter of course with others that are *Secondary*. But in this case the protasis has no apodosis. *Fundamental* would have been a better word than *Primary*. Then *Essential* and *Natural* are so nearly synonymous that it can only breed confusion to use them in contrast. Besides, all attributes of God are equally essential. There are none, therefore, entitled, by way of pre-eminence, to usurp this distinction.

In the *next* place, the classification is confused. God as Spirit is distinguished from God as intelligent. The natural attributes are made pendants of the essential, as if there were a faculty of knowledge in God apart from His knowledge itself. Abating the perplexity and confusion both of thought and language, the classification is substantially the same as that of Dr. Hodge. The Primary attributes are those which I have described as Modal, or all-pervading, and Dr. Hodge has spoken of as qualifying all the rest. The Essential and Natural are those which Dr. Hodge has called simply Natural—avoiding the implication that there is any distinction between faculty and acts in the Divine understanding. The

Moral are the same in both divisions. The Consummate do not exactly coincide, but they differ only in extension.

The simplest division.

The simplest division is that which is grounded in the obvious distinction between those perfections which pervade the whole being and every other perfection of God, and those which are special and determinative. Here the boundaries are clear and distinct. The determinative attributes of God may be subdivided into Intellectual and Moral—the two great outlines which include all the excellence of a personal Spirit. The Consummate attributes seem to me to be a needless distinction.

In the development of this subject the plan which I shall pursue will be first, to treat of the nature of God as Spiritual and Personal; and then to unfold the attributes in the order in which they have here been classed.

LECTURE VII.

SPIRITUALITY OF GOD.

THE spirituality of God is the foundation of all religious worship. It is only as a spirit that He is possessed of those attributes of intelligence, goodness, justice, power, holiness and truth which make Him the object of our prayers, our praises, our confidence and hopes. It is only as a spirit that He is a person, and, consequently, only as a spirit that He can enter into communion with us and communicate to us the tokens of His favour and His love. A blind force, a stern and irresistible necessity, might be an object of terror and of dread, but it would be absurd to pray to it, to trust in it, or to love it. Our Saviour, in His interview with the woman of Samaria, makes the spirituality of God determine the nature and the kind of worship which we are to render to the Father of our spirits. But the argument goes much farther—it determines the ground of the possibility of worship. There could be no true worshippers at all, for there would be nothing to which worship could be consistently adapted, if God were not spirit.

This truth, the foundation of the worship,

More than this: the spirituality of God is not only the foundation of all religious worship—it is the foundation of all the Divine attributes. Without spirit there could be no life; without life, no activity; without activity, no causal agency. Infinity, immensity, eternity, simplicity and immutability, as well as omniscience, holiness, goodness and truth, are grossly incompatible with the notion of matter as compound,

and also of the attributes of God.

divisible, discerptible, destructible. Hence, to deny that God is spirit is tantamount to Atheism.

Scripture proofs of the doctrine.

There is only one passage of Scripture in which it is explicitly affirmed that God is a spirit, but the doctrine is implicitly contained in all the representations which it makes of His nature and perfections. In John iv. 24 the direct testimony of Christ has been evaded by making *Spirit* the accusative case, and supplying the word *seeks* from the preceding verse. The sense would then be not that God *is* a spirit, but that God *seeks* the spirit, or demands the spirit from His worshippers. This is the interpretation of Vorstius. The reason which he assigns is, that the argument from the nature of God to the nature of the worship He exacts is not valid and consequential. It is not His *nature*, but His *will* that determines the character of worship. But to this it may be readily replied that the nature determines the will; so that the nature of God is the *foundation*, while the *will* of God is the *rule* or *measure* of religious worship.[1] If the reasoning, it is contended, from a spiritual nature to a spiritual worship is valid, then the inference would be sound from a bodily worship, such as that enjoined upon the Jews, to a bodily nature. But it is forgotten that the body is not the worshipper, but only an instrument of worship. It is the means of manifesting the inward condition—the outward expression of the invisible spirit. Apart from this relation, bodily exercise profiteth nothing. There seems to be no good reason, therefore, for departing from the ordinary interpretation: God is a spirit. But even if we should adopt the exposition of Vorstius, the spirituality of God might still, as Limborch[2] suggests, be fairly collected from the text. Why should He demand a spiritual worship if He were not a spiritual being? Why should He exact an homage that was wholly inconsistent with his essential perfections?—an homage, in fact, by which the worshipper shows himself superior to the worshipped.

[1] Charnock, vol. i., p. 245. [2] Theol. Christ., Lib. ii., c. iv.

Among the passages in which the spirituality of God is obviously implied are Numbers xvi. 22, in which He is entitled *The God of the spirits of all flesh;* and Hebrews xii. 9, in which He is denominated *The Father of spirits.* He is evidently their Father, in the sense that they spring from Him and are like Him. The contrast betwixt God and the Egyptians in Isaiah xxxi. 3, "that the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit," proceeds upon the assumption that God is pre-eminently spiritual. The Third Person of the Trinity is unquestionably spirit. *Holy Spirit* or *Holy Ghost* (for ghost and spirit are synonymous) is His proper name, and as He is substantially the same with the Father and the Son, the Father and the Son must be spirit also. All those passages, moreover, which ascribe wisdom, knowledge, counsel, purpose and decrees to God—which represent Him, in other words, as possessed of intellectual and moral perfections—are so many proofs of a spiritual nature. As the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain, the existence of finite and dependent spirits in the case of angels and of men involves the existence of the Supreme and Absolute spirit as their principle and source. He that planted the ear, shall not He hear? He that formed the eye, shall not He see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know? Abolish this doctrine of the Divine spirituality, and the Scripture testimonies to God become a tissue of contradictions and absurdities. It lies at the root of everything they teach.

The ancient philosophers concur.

The ancient heathen philosophers concur in the same fundamental truth. The supreme God of Plato and Aristotle figures as the Supreme intelligence or mind. Socrates sought Him as the explanation of the principle of order, and pursues the argument from final causes in the very spirit of modern teleologists. Plutarch[1] calls Him a pure intelligence, simple and unmixed in His own nature, but mingling Himself with

[1] Quoted in Owen, vol. viii., p. 147.

everything besides. And whatever may be said of the Pantheistic vein, the testimony to God as Mind is clear and decisive in the well-known lines of Virgil:

> "Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
> Mens agitat molem." [1]

Negatively, equivalent to immaterial.

The spirituality of God is both a negative and a positive truth. As negative it denies of Him the properties and affections of matter; it is equivalent to immaterial. Hence He is not a being who can be represented to sense, nor figured in the imagination. He is not divisible into parts, nor circumscribed by space. He exists as an unit, simple and indiscerptible, and therefore indestructible. It is clear that a material being cannot be infinite, or if he could be infinite it would destroy the possibility of all finite matter. Its nature is to be bounded by figure, and to exclude every other matter from the space which it occupies. As bounded, it cannot be infinite: as exclusive, if it were infinite, it would absolutely fill the immensity of space and preclude the coexistence of finite portions.

There have been those who have interpreted literally the language of Scripture which predicates of God bodily members and organs, and have consequently sunk Him to the low condition of corporeal existence. This coarse anthropomorphism or anthropopathism, as it has been called, was attributed to the Ebionites, to the monks of Egypt and to the sect of the Audians. It has certainly been maintained, in modern times, by more than one disciple of Socinus. It was the doctrine of Vorstius; the doctrine of Biddle in the Catechism, so conclusively refuted by Owen in the *Vindiciæ Evangelicæ;* the doctrine of Hobbes; and still more recently the doctrine of Priestly. It is now abandoned by the Socinians, who have approximated more closely than their predecessors to the spiritual Deism of philosophy.

Ancient and modern anthropomorphites.

[1] Æn. vi., 726, 727.

Tertullian defended.

Tertullian has been accused of attributing a body to God, and so far as the letter of the accusation is concerned the charge is unquestionably just. But by *body* he evidently means nothing more than substantial existence—something permanent and abiding, and not like a breath of air or a transitory vapour. In the same sense he predicates a body of the human soul, but yet describes it in a manner which precludes the notion of material composition.[1] Indeed he tells us articulately[2] what he means by *body*. "Nothing can exist," says he, "but as having something by which it exists. As the soul, however, exists, it must needs have something by which it exists. That something is its body. Everything is a body of its own kind. Nothing is incorporeal which has real existence." Body is, therefore, nothing more nor less than the indispensable condition of existence. It is the permanent element amid the variable and changing, and it is material or spiritual according to the nature of the object. A passage quoted in Kitto's Cyclopædia, under the title Anthropomorphism, will show how far this celebrated father was from anything like a material conception of God. "Divine affections," says he, "are ascribed to the Deity by means of figures borrowed from the human form, not as if He were indued with corporeal qualities. When eyes are ascribed to Him, it denotes that He sees all things; when ears, that He hears all things; the speech denotes His will; nostrils, the perception of prayer; hands, creation; arms, power; feet, immensity; for He has no members and performs no office for which they are required, but executes all things by the sole act of His will. How can He require eyes who is light itself? or feet who is omnipresent? How can He require hands who is the silent Creator of all things? or a tongue to whom to think is to command? Those members are necessary to men, but not to God, inasmuch as the counsels of men would be inefficacious unless their thoughts

[1] See Burton's Bampton Lectures, note 59.

[2] Ad Prax., c. 7.

put their members in motion; but not to God, whose operations follow His will without effort."

The Scriptures themselves sufficiently guard against the perverse application of their bold metaphors in attributing the organs of the human body to the supreme God, when they articulately remind us that His arm is not an arm of flesh, nor His eyes eyes of flesh, neither seeth He as man seeth.[1] The same wonder which in one place is ascribed to the "finger of God" is attributed in another to the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost; cf. Luke xi. 20; Matt. xii. 28. To the candid reader there is no danger of being misled by such representations. They are obvious condescensions to the infirmities of human thought, and are designed to signify that there are acts of God analogous to those for which we employ these members. When he is said to see or to hear, the meaning is that He knows with as absolute a certainty as we can obtain by the evidence of the eye or the ear. These organs are simply symbols of knowledge, His arm and hand the symbols of power, and His bowels the symbol of tender compassion.[2] The exposition of Tertullian quoted above is clear and satisfactory.

Anthropomorphism of Scripture explained.

It is remarkable, too, that no organs are ascribed to God similar to those by which we perform the mean and disreputable functions of the body, and no offices which savour of weakness or of imperfection. The intent of Scripture could not be more nicely discriminated. "To eat and sleep are never ascribed to Him, nor those parts that belong to the preparing or transmitting nourishment to the several parts of the body, as stomach, liver, veins nor bowels, under that consideration, but as they are significant of compassion. But only those parts are ascribed to Him whereby we acquire knowledge, as eyes and ears, the organs of learning and wisdom; or to communicate it to others, as the the mouth, lips, tongue, as they are instruments of speak-

[1] 2 Chron. xxxii. 8; Job x. 4. Cf. Owen, vol. viii., p. 154.

[2] See Charnock, i., pp. 262, 263.

ing, not of tasting; or those parts which signify strength and power, or whereby we perform the actions of charity for the relief of others. Taste and touch, senses that extend no farther than to corporeal things, and are the grossest of all the senses, are never ascribed to Him."[1]

God immaterial, as not to be figured by images.

The immateriality of God is clearly implied in all those texts which represent His glory as being incapable of being figured by images. The second commandment forbids the making of any graven image, or the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Moses reminds the Israelites that they saw no manner of similitude when the Lord spoke to them in Horeb out of the midst of the fire; and enjoins upon them to take heed to themselves lest they should be seduced to make them a graven image, the similitude of any figure.[2] The Apostle Paul reminds the Athenians that the Godhead is not like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device;[3] and the Saviour Himself appeals to the Jews that they had never heard the voice at any time, nor seen the shape of God.[4]

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus there occurs a passage which, at the first view, seems to be inconsistent with the general teaching of Scripture: "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." (Vv. 9, 10.) Onkelos renders it the glory of the God of Israel; and when we remember that God is invisible in Himself, dwelling in light which no creature can venture to approach, there can be no doubt that the allusion is to some brilliant symbol of the Divine presence, in keeping with the majestic pediment upon which it stood. "The colour of sapphire," says Calvin,[5] "was presented to them to elevate

[1] Charnock i., p. 263. [2] Deut. iv. 15, seq. [3] Acts xvii. 29.
[4] John v. 37. [5] Harm. Pent., vol. iii., p. 323.

their minds by its brightness above the world, and therefore it is immediately added that its appearance was as of the clear and serene sky. By this symbol they were reminded that the glory of God is above all heavens; and since in His very footstool there is such exquisite and surpassing beauty, something still more sublime must be thought of Himself, and such as would ravish all our senses with admiration."

Positively, the doctrine ascribes to God personality.

The positive thing which is involved in the spirituality of God is that He is a self-conscious subject, a Person possessed of intelligence and will. We can conceive an immaterial substance which is not a person—such as the vital principle in brutes, and the plastic nature which the ancients invented as the soul of the world. There may be a receptivity of impressions, of sensations, of presentations, and even of representations of the imagination in memory, without any distinct consciousness of self. The phenomena appear and disappear like the images of a mirror, but there is no feeling which collects them into a common centre, and reduces them to unity as the varied experiences of a single, permanent, abiding subject. The brute knows not itself; it only knows its sensations. It can never say, *My* thought, *my* wish, *my* desire. What we call its soul is never realized to it as an unit; it appears only as a series of phenomena. When we have learned to discriminate between our fleeting and transitory modes of consciousness and that which successively subsists in these modes, when we learn to distinguish between the thinker and his thoughts, then we come to the knowledge of ourselves. The broad and impassable distinction between mind and matter, between a person and a thing, is, that the one knows and knows that it knows, while the other is only an object to be known. The one has a free activity, the other moves only as it is moved. The one acts, the other is acted upon. Perhaps the clearest realization of self-hood is in the phenomena of will. It was the doctrine

of Locke and the Scotch philosophers that our own existence was not directly given in consciousness, but was a matter of inference and necessary belief. All that we can directly know are the phenomena of self—its thoughts, sensations, desires; but not self, or the thinking principle itself. This principle has been successfully combated by Sir William Hamilton and Mr. Mansel, and the dualism of consciousness brought out in a strong and clear light. Mr. Mansel has pressed the phenomena of will as decisive of the question. "If," says he,[1] "in the mental state which corresponds to the judgment, *I will*, there is no consciousness of *I*, but only of *will*, it is impossible to place the essential feature of volition, as has been done above, *in the consciousness of myself having power over my own determinations*. *Will*, and not *I*, being the primary fact of consciousness, the causative power of volition must be sought in the relation between will and some subsequent phenomenon; and so sought, it will assuredly never be found. It cannot be found where Locke sought it, in the relation between the determination of the will and the consequent motion of the limb; for the determination is not the immediate antecedent of the motion, but only of the intervening nervous and muscular action. I cannot therefore be immediately conscious of my power to move a limb when I am not immediately conscious of my power to produce the antecedent phenomena. Nor yet can the causative power be found where Maine de Biran sought it, in the relation of the will to the action of the nerves and muscles; for this relation may at any time be interrupted by purely physical causes, such as a stroke of paralysis; and in that case no exertion of the will can produce the desired effect. We can escape from this difficulty, the stronghold of skepticism and necessitarianism, by one path only, and that is by a more accurate analysis of the purely mental state, which will discover an immediate consciousness of power in *myself, determining my own volitions*."

Locke.

Hamilton and Mansel.

[1] Metaphys., p. 175.

Here, then, is an immediate revelation of myself, and of myself as a power—as a real, abiding, subsisting thing. So far is it from being true that our knowledge of matter is superior to our knowledge of mind, that it is precisely the reverse which holds. The reality of matter I can never seize at all, but the reality of self is given in every act of consciousness. It is the only reality, apart from phenomena, that falls within the province of our faculties. It is the only thing that we are entitled to denominate being, as contra-distinguished from appearance. "Personality," says Mansel,[1] "like all other simple and immediate presentations, is indefinable; but it is so because it is superior to definition. It can be analyzed into no simpler elements, for it is itself one element of a product which defies analysis. It can be made no clearer by description or comparison, for it is revealed to us in all the clearness of an original intuition, of which description and comparison can furnish only faint and partial resemblances." God is a Spirit. God is a Person. This is the highest conception which our finite faculties can frame of His nature; it is the noblest tribute which we are capable of paying to His being.

In paying this tribute, let it be mentioned, as distinctly implied in personality, that we separate God from every other being besides. He is not the universe. He is not law. He is not the result of material organization. He is in Himself, by Himself, and for Himself. His existence is pre-eminently and absolutely His own. Separateness of being is as essential to personality as simplicity or unity. It distinguishes and differences. Hence, every form of Pantheism is inconsistent with the noblest idea which we are able to frame of God. He affirms Himself in affirming that He is not the finite; as we affirm ourselves, as subjects, in affirming that we are not the objects of our knowledge. Self and not-self divide existence, and each excludes the other.

Separateness of being in opposition to every form of Pantheism.

[1] Metaphys., p. 182.

Let us consider some of the elements that are contained in the proposition that God is a Spirit.

1. In the first place, it is equivalent to saying that God has life; and as the infinite Spirit that He has life in Himself. He is the source and fountain of all life, and possesses in Himself, in perfect fullness, what He has distributed in various portions to the creatures of His hands. Hence, He claims it as His prerogative to be the only living as well as true God. He only hath immortality in Himself; and the highest and most solemn guarantee of truth which even a Divine oath can give is found in the immutability of the Divine life. "As I live, saith the Lord," is the most awful adjuration which even God can make. We know not what life is, in any of its forms, in its own essential nature. It is so subtle that it escapes the knife of the anatomist, the tests of the chemist and the skill of the physiologist. It is everywhere present in the animal frame, but nowhere to be seized and detected apart from its phenomenal effects. We know what it does, but we are wholly unable to explain what it is. It is the badge of honour among the works of God—as they increase in life, they rise in dignity and worth. It is the excellence of man's life, as a spiritual, thinking being, that constitutes man's glory in the domain of sublunary existence. "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind." This life implies activity—a power of self-motion and of self-determination. The grounds of its action, in reference to God, are solely within Himself. He is not moved or impelled from without; the springs of His energy are all within, in the fullness and depths of His own being. He never rests, never slumbers, never grows weary, never relaxes His activity. To live is His blessedness as well as His glory. Ceaseless action is the very essence of His nature. It is a badge of imperfection among us that our energies become fatigued by exertion, and that we require intervals of relaxation and repose. One half of our lives is lost in sleep;

As spiritual, God is necessary life,

and activity.

and even in our waking moments continued intensity of thought has a tendency to consume the frame which carries so active a tenant. The brighter the candle burns, the more rapidly it wastes away. We sigh for the period when we shall be clothed with our spiritual bodies, and introduced into a world in which there is neither sleep nor night; in which exertion shall be uninterrupted and complete; in which all the powers of the soul shall be eternally and intensely exercised, but exercised in such just and beautiful proportions that the rapture shall become sobriety and the excitement a calm. Yet even in its purest and most exalted state our activity is limited and derived. It is and ever must be dependent on conditions. But the activity, the life of God is without restriction or defect. Self-originated and self-sustained, it is equal to itself from everlasting to everlasting. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Could God pause in the ceaseless flow of His energies, the heavens must cease to roll and the earth to move; rivers cease to flow and the ocean to receive them; the general pulse of life would cease to beat, and the awful silence of death pervade the universe. It is as God lives that all else live besides. They live and move and have their being in Him. The pledge of universal safety is that He never slumbers nor sleeps. How different is such a God from the indolent idol of Epicurean philosophy! How different the happiness which flows from the fullness and energy of unimpeded exercise from the voluptuous repose which possesses attractions only for ignoble natures! It is true that man's sin has added pain to labor and converted work into toil. But in itself, the highest and freest activity is the highest bliss; and God is infinitely blessed only as He is infinitely active.

God's activity is of thought and will.

2. But in the next place, the activity of God is not mere motion or agitation. It is the highest and noblest of all activity—the activity of thought and will. He is to Himself an inexhaustible fountain of knowledge and action. He is not a blind principle operating by a stern necessity, uncon-

scious of the laws which determine and regulate His movements. He is no remorseless fate, no soul of the world, no abstract substance without definite qualities and attributes. He knows what He does, and does it because He knows it to be right and wise. He is the master of Himself. His will is absolutely and unchangeably free, and in its freedom is never divorced from wisdom and justice. He is no necessary cause, but He creates only because he chooses to create. He dispenses His gifts according to His own sovereign pleasure. He rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou? He worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will. It is in this Being of knowledge and liberty, this Being of pure spiritual life, that we recognize the God who made the heavens and the earth, and in whom we live and move and have our being, and whom we are bound to worship with our whole souls. This is the God whose right it is to reign, for He is worthy. What energy can be compared with intelligence? What Being so exalted as He who can say, "I know and I will"? These simple monosyllables bridge a boundless chasm in the order of existence. And how glorious must He be who stands at the head of this order, and concentrates within Himself all the resources of wisdom and knowledge and goodness—who gathers into the burning focus of His own being every ray of intellectual and moral beauty that is anywhere reflected in the boundless universe! How glorious is God, who is all knowledge and all will, whose very life is to know and will, with whom to be and to know are synonymous! One soul is greater than a whole universe of matter. What, then, must God be who is an infinite Spirit!

The nature of God's unity and simplicity.

3. In the third place, we may see the sense in which we are to understand the unity and simplicity of God. I mean the intrinsic unity which pertains to His essence, and not the relative unity which excludes more than one such being. The

unity and simplicity are certainly the unity and simplicity of spirit—an unity which is attested in every act of consciousness. The human soul is one; it cannot be resolved into parts; it cannot be divided, so that a portion shall be here and a portion there. It always exists and acts in its totality. The *I* is the very perfection of simplicity. But when theologians go farther, and from abstract speculations on the infinite preclude every species of distinction in the modes of its existence, they are warranted by no finite analogies, and transcend accordingly the limits of human thought. What they say may be true, but they have no means of verifying their assertion. The relative unity or *onliness* of God precludes genera and species. His intrinsic unity precludes separable accidents, but what warrant is there for precluding the distinction of substance and attribute, or precluding distinctions among the attributes themselves? The thing may be just and proper, but we can never prove it to be so, and the only unity accordingly which we are authorized to attribute to God is an unity analogous to that of the human soul.

Because spiritual, God can commune with our spirits.

4. In the fourth place, because God is a Spirit, He can enter into communion with our spirits. This is one of the most mysterious attributes of mind—the power by which it can impart to others the knowledge of what passes within itself. It is this peculiarity which lies at the foundation of the possibility of society. If each soul existed only as an individual, and there was no medium by which its thoughts and feelings and affections could be communicated to other souls, there might be contiguity in space, but there could be no such moral unions among men as those which are presented in the Family, the Church and the State. Intense individualism would be the law of all human life. We are so familiar with the interchange of thoughts and feelings, that we have ceased to marvel at the mystery it involves. But it is a mystery notwithstanding, and a mystery which, while all must accept it as a fact, no human philosophy

can explain. Mind does hold commerce with mind. The thoughts of one man can be transferred to another—the consciousness of one man can to some extent be laid bare to another. And so God can communicate with His intelligent creatures. He can make known to them His attitude in relation to them. He can enter into their souls, and warm and irradiate them with the tokens of His favour, or depress and alarm them with the sense of His displeasure. It is His spirituality which enables Him to be communicative, and which consequently enables Him to become *the portion* of their souls. Apart from this He could not be the supreme and satisfying good. Hence His spirituality lies at the foundation of all true religion. Take that away, and there is and can be no sympathy betwixt the worshipper and the worshipped. There may be contiguity and impact, but there can be no union, no communion. Each would still be a stranger to the other.

Because spiritual, God cannot be represented by images.

5. This subject reveals to us the real folly and danger of idolatry. By idolatry I here mean any attempt to represent God by images, whether those images are regarded really as God, or only as symbols of His presence. The two things are substantially the same. To worship the image, and to worship God in and by the image, produce similar effects upon the mind of the worshipper. His thoughts in either case are regulated and determined by the object before Him.

The idol, a twofold lie.

Now every image is a falsehood in two respects. In the first place, it represents the living by the dead. That which has life in itself, whose essence it is to live, is figured by that whose nature is essentially inert. There is no point of resemblance betwixt mind and matter. They exist only as contrasts. Hence the image must be a doctrine of falsehood; it must lead the mind into wrong trains of thought in reference to the nature of God; it must degrade Him to some of the conditions of matter.

In the next place, the image is a falsehood, inasmuch as it

represents a free activity by that which is the victim of a stern necessity. God, as self-moved, cannot be symbolized by any object whose law is to move only as it is moved. Mechanical necessity can never figure freedom of will, and yet this is the very core of the Divine Personality. It is that which makes God the object of our worship.

These two fundamental errors must prove fatal in the moral education of the worshipper. It is impossible to think by the image and yet think in accordance with the truth. A mechanical religion is the only worship that can spring from idolatry. Hence it is that the Divine law guards so sacredly the purity of Divine worship. To admit images is to necessitate the moral degradation of God; and to degrade God is, inevitably, in the final reaction, to degrade ourselves. From the nature of the case, idolatry must wax worse and worse as its fundamental falsehoods acquire a stronger hold upon the mind. The only remedy is to prevent the beginnings of the evil, and that is done in the stern decree of the second commandment. A spiritual God can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth. A free Personal God can only be worshipped with a free personal will.

LECTURE VIII.

THE INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

HAVING discussed the spirituality, and in a general way the personality, of God, the next thing in order would be the peculiar mode of the Divine Personality in the doctrine of the Trinity. But as that is an extensive topic, and its introduction here would break the continuity of the discourse in relation to the attributes, we propose to postpone it until the subject of the attributes has been completed. The topic, accordingly, which is now to engage our attention is that division of the attributes which is commonly called *incommunicable*, and which we have seen are universal and all-pervading, characterizing alike the whole being and every perfection of God. They are special aspects of the absolute and infinite—or rather applications of the general notion of the infinite to special aspects in which God may be considered. Contemplated with reference to the grounds of His being, the infinite gives rise to the notion of independence or self-existence; with reference to the duration of His being, to eternity; with reference to the extent of His being, to immensity; with reference to the contents of His being, to all-sufficiency; with reference to the identity of His being, to immutability. Independence, eternity, immensity, all-sufficiency and immutability are therefore the forms under which we recognize the distinctions which separate God by an impassable chasm from every work of His hands. These are the badges of Divinity—that glory which He will not and cannot give to another. Without these, He would only

Universal and all-pervading attributes.

be a man or an angel on a larger scale. These, too, constitute the veil which hangs over the mystery of His being—a veil which, according to the inscription upon the temple of Isis, no mortal will ever be able to remove. We can only stand afar off and gaze at the ineffable glory. We can adore where we cannot understand. Let us treat of them in order; and first of Independence.

Independence.

I. Independence, self-existence, necessary existence, absolute being, are only so many different modes of expressing one and the same thing, and that thing is the negation of a cause. God has never begun to be. His existence is dependent upon no species of cause, either that of a superior will, or that resulting from the union and combination of elements, which may again be separated and reduce Him to nothing. He is because He is. "I am that I am." We can go no farther in explaining the grounds of His being. The understanding is paralyzed, but faith is not staggered. If there be caused being, there must be uncaused being; and if we are disposed to shrink from the mystery of uncaused being, let us reflect again and see whether caused being is any more easily comprehended. Can we solve the mystery of power? Can we explain how that which was nothing ever began to be? Is not creation as dark and inscrutable as underived existence? Do not the very limits of our faculties warn us of a world beyond which those faculties were never designed to penetrate, save with the torch of faith? The fact of creation, the fact of a creator, we can easily grasp; but how the one came to be, and the other always was, is beyond our compass. We have enough to regulate our worship, but not enough to satisfy curiosity.

The mystery of caused and uncaused being.

There are modes of expression in relation to the independence of God which, however they may be justified by the poverty of language, are yet liable to gross perversion and abuse. He is said to be the ground of His own existence in a way which

Some modes of expression criticised.

seems to imply that He is His own proper cause. Now self-existence should never be taken in a positive, but a negative sense. No being can originate itself. The very notion is self-contradictory—for it involves existence and non-existence at the same time. All that is meant is the denial to the being of any origin at all. It has no cause, nothing anterior or superior on which it depends. Necessity is also sometimes represented as a ground of the Divine existence, in such a way as to imply that it is a real, productive cause, or at least a something prior in the order of thought to the being of God. Dr. Clarke is not free from censure in this respect. He certainly treats necessity as something closely akin to a cause, and deduces inferences from it as if it were a positive principle which we were able to apprehend. But necessity, like existence, is only negative in its application to God. It expresses the fact that, the finite being given, we cannot but think the existence of the infinite. To us, that existence is necessary as the explanation of what is caused and dependent. The necessity, however, only involves again the denial of a cause. It is simply the declaration that there must be an unoriginated cause.

Independence involved in the very being of God,

The independence of God is contained in every argument which proves His being. To deny it is, therefore, to deny the existence of any God at all. If all is dependent, all is finite, all is made, and yet there is nothing to depend upon and nothing to make. We shall have an universe of creatures and no creator—a chain of a limited number of links, with nothing to hang on at the top and nothing to lean on at the bottom; or if the series be considered as infinite, we shall have the contradiction of a whole which has no beginning made up of parts each of which began. The first aspect under which God appears to us in the field of speculation is as the underived and independent. The mind seeks an extra-mundane cause. It wants something to support the finite, and it never rests until the infinite is re-

and everywhere presupposed in Scripture.

vealed to its faith. The Scriptures, too, everywhere presuppose the independence of God. It is implied in His name Jehovah, in His being the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the first and last, the beginning and the end of all things. A point so plain it were superfluous to establish by the citation of passages.

Pervades every determinate perfection.

It must not be forgotten that this independence pervades every determinate perfection of God as well as His being. He is independent in knowledge; He derives nothing from without; He has no teachers; and He has nothing to learn. If in any respect He were ignorant, in that respect He would be dependent for His knowledge. He has no partners in counsel; His wisdom is as original as His nature; and His power is free from all limitations and conditions. He does what He will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou? So, also, His righteousness, holiness, goodness and truth are as absolute as His nature. On the same ground that He is at all, He is what He is.

Eternity.

II. Contemplated with reference to the duration of His being, God is said to be eternal. His eternity is defined by Boethius to be the possession, at once total and perfect, of an interminable life. It is represented by the Schoolmen as a stationary point—a permanent and unchanging now, so as to exclude the notions of succession and change. These are abortive efforts to realize in thought what transcends the conditions of our consciousness.

Abortive efforts to define it.

We are subject to the law of time, and can think nothing apart from the relation of time. A duration which is not time is as completely beyond our conceptions as a place which is not space. Even in regard to time we can think it only "as an indefinite past, present or future." We cannot represent it as absolutely beginning, for that would suppose a consciousness within and out of time at the same

moment; and for the same reason we cannot suppose it as absolutely ending. We cannot think the indivisible moment, the point which separates the past from the future; it is always gone before we can seize it. Eternity has been divided into eternity *a parte ante* and *a parte post*, but the division evidently involves a contradiction—the contradiction of an eternity begun and an eternity concluded. We are therefore obliged to maintain that time is not the same as eternity; and, inconceivable as the thing is, we are obliged to affirm that eternity admits of no succession of parts. It has no past, present or future. We are obliged to come to the conclusion of Boethius and the Schoolmen, and yet when we have reached that conclusion what is it that we positively know? Nothing but the fact that God in the mode of His existence transcends time. We only deny to His consciousness and to His being the limitations of our own. But what eternity is in itself we are as ignorant of as we were before. We deny to God beginning of life or end of days; we deny to Him succession of thought or change of state; we deny to Him the possibility of age or decay; He is neither young nor old. Beyond these negations we cannot go, but these negations impress us with the conviction of transcendent excellence. They assert an absolute immortality which surpasses all power of imagination or of thought. Time with its remorseless tooth destroys everything around us; kingdoms rise and fall; generation succeeds generation to the regions of the dead; trees wither and fade and perish; the mountain falling cometh to naught; Nature herself waxes old and is ready to vanish away, but the Eternal God remains fixed in His being, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. His years fail not. He is always the great "I Am." Eternity is a mystery, but it is a mystery which shrouds and covers unspeakable glory. How delightful to think in the midst of universal change and desolation, that there is one Being who liveth and abideth for ever—one Being who, when the

Our conceptions all negative,

yet imply transcendent excellence.

heavens shall be rolled up as a vesture, the sun blotted out, and the moon and stars bereft of their brightness, can lift His awful hand and swear by Himself, "Behold, I live for ever!" Before the earth was, or the stars of the morning sang together, or the sons of God shouted for joy, Jehovah was. Were all the creatures annihilated by a single blow, and the void of nothing to take the place which is now filled by a teeming and a joyous universe, Jehovah would still be. Above and beyond time and all its phenomena, He is untouched by its changes and disasters. Eternity is His dwelling-place, and "I Am" is His name.

Immensity,

III. Contemplated in reference to the extent of His being, God is said to be immense. This expresses His relation to space, as eternity expresses His relation to time. It implies that God in the fullness of His essence is present to every point of space in every point of time. Omnipresence is His immensity considered in relation to His creatures. It is His presence to them; but as the created universe is limited, His presence, if He be infinite, must extend infinitely beyond it. He is where the creatures are, but He is also where creatures never are, never have been and never will be. But the immensity of a simple essence is as incomprehensible as eternity. We cannot conceive of infinite space, much less can we conceive of an inextended substance, pervading every portion of this boundless field in the entire plenitude of His being.

distinguished from omnipresence.

Relation of spirits to space.

How spirits are related to space at all it is impossible to say. They are not circumscribed by it like body; they do not occupy or fill it; and yet they are so restricted to it in their energies and operations that we can properly say they are here and not there. They have a presence of some kind, as the soul is present in the body and the angels present in prescribed spheres, necessitating locomotion in enlarging the area of their working.

As God's immensity precludes all extension, so it pre-

cludes all mixture with other objects that exist in space. One finite being excludes another from the same place. Two souls never exist in the same body, and two angels have not the same presence to any given locality. But God pervades every other being without mixture or confusion. He is as intimately present to our own souls as our own consciousness. He knows every thought, He perceives every desire; there is not a word in our tongue, but lo! He knoweth it altogether. The whole universe stands naked and bare to His inspection. And yet He is as perfectly distinct from the universe and from every object in it as if He dwelt in distant and inaccessible regions. One finite being is not so completely diverse from another as God from every creature that He has made. He is separated from the finite by a chasm as boundless as His immensity.

Mixture with other objects in space, precluded.

Some have resolved the universal presence of God into the virtual presence of His power—meaning nothing more than that He is capable of producing effects beyond His own immediate locality, and that the symbols and means of His authority are everywhere diffused, as a king may be said in a modified sense to be present in every part of his dominions. But such a presence is constructive, and to attribute only such a presence to God is to deny His infinity. If His essence sustains not the same relation to all space—if there is a region, no matter how large, to which it is restricted in its actual being—then God becomes finite and dependent. The region beyond is aloof from Him, and He can only act on it through instruments and means.

Not the mere virtual presence of His power.

The Scriptures are abundant in their references to this amazing perfection of God. "Whither," says the Psalmist,[1] "shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there! If I take

Scripture testimony full,

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 7–10.

the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." "Behold, the heaven of heavens," says Solomon,[1] "cannot contain Thee." "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."[2] It were useless to multiply passages. This is one of the points in which the Sacred Scriptures show their immense superiority to all the devices of human wisdom and policy. The gods of the heathen were all local deities. They were circumscribed in space, and subject to the conditions of time and matter. It was reserved for a rude people, just escaping from bondage and degradation, to reveal a sublimer theology than the Porch, Academy or Lyceum ever dreamed of. A spiritual, eternal, omnipresent, infinite God is the pervading doctrine of a race, unskilled in letters and constantly prone to relapse into superstition. How clear the proof that the Bible is no contrivance of man!

and proves the Bible to be not of man.

It may be well to remark that, besides the essential presence, the Scriptures sometimes speak of a presence which consists in peculiar manifestations of the Divine favour or anger. In the first sense God was present in the Jewish temple. He there manifested His mercy and grace to the people. It was there He showed Himself pleased with their worship, and answered the prayers and intercessions they made to Him. In this sense, too, He is present in heaven. He there communicates to saints and angels the richest tokens of His love. They have free and undisturbed communion with Him as the Father of their spirits. In the second sense He is present in hell. He there reveals the tokens of His justice. The impenitent and devils are made to feel the weight of His displeasure against sin. And so God is said to withdraw Himself and to hide His face; not that

Special sense in which God is said to be present.

[1] 1 Kings viii. 27. [2] Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.

His essential presence is diminished, but the marks of His favour are withheld. He ceases to show Himself propitious.

Practical uses of the doctrine.

The immensity, like the eternity of God, transcends all finite conception, but as a regulative fact it is of the utmost importance. To the saint it is full of comfort. He can never be removed beyond the reach of his Redeemer and his Friend. Go where he may, he is still surrounded with God, who compasses him before and behind, and lays His hand upon him. He knows our hearts infinitely better than we know them ourselves. Those desires which we cannot utter, and those penitent distresses which can only reveal themselves in tears and groans, He thoroughly comprehends. Our whole hearts are before Him in the nakedness of a perfect, infallible intuition. He understands our wants, appreciates our weakness and can accommodate His grace precisely to our case. Men may misconstrue us; they may impugn our motives, traduce our characters and assail us with unjust reproaches; how delightful the truth that there is One who knows us, and who will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noonday! What a rebuke, too, is this truth to every species of hypocrisy! How idle to think of concealment from Him to whom the night is even as the day, darkness as transparent as light! And what a check should it be to wickedness that we are ever with God—that there is no darkness or shadow of death whither we can escape from His presence. He pursues us more closely than our own shadows in the sun. He is with us in the very depths of our soul, in the most secret recesses of our consciousness. Awake or asleep, at home or abroad, in sickness or in health, by land or sea, we are still with God. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, we cannot attain unto it. Hence, too, under the Gospel, prayer can be made everywhere, for everywhere the ears of the Eternal are open. It is no longer at Jerusalem, nor yet at Gerizim; but in every spot of earth trodden by the foot of man true worship may be offered, if offered in the name of Christ.

The whole earth has become a temple, and every place a place for prayer.

All-sufficiency.

IV. We come next to the all-sufficiency of God, which is the infinite and absolute considered with reference to the contents of the Divine Being. It means that God contains within Himself the fullness of perfection and blessedness—that nothing can be taken from Him and nothing added to Him. He is His own satisfying portion, and the end and portion of all His intelligent creatures. He can never want; he can never be subject to unsatisfied desire; he can never be disturbed by care or solicitude. He is the perfect good. All the perfections of all the creatures are in Him, formally, eminently or virtually. Let me explain these terms. Perfections, according to the Schoolmen, were divided into two classes, those that were absolutely simple—*simpliciter simplices*—and those that were only relative perfections, or perfections *secundum quid*, called also *mixed*. An absolute perfection had no imperfection in it, and is better than its opposite, or than any other thing with which it is incompatible in the same subject. These perfections in their own formal and essential nature, abstracted from the conditions under which they manifest themselves in us, are predicated of God, and are therefore said to be *formally* in Him. Mixed perfections have an element of imperfection in them; they are only relative to certain kinds of things, and are *called* perfections because these things admit nothing higher and better. They would cease to be what they are if adorned with higher and better. Human reason, human will, human intelligence are relative perfections, but they are mixed with limitation and defect. The properties of gold with reference to that metal are perfections, but they are not *simply* better than other qualities with which in gold they cannot co-exist. Now those perfections which are imperfect by limitation and defect are predicated of God in the way of *eminence*—that is, they exist in Him in a higher

Contains the plenitude of the universe.

Scholastic terms explained.

degree and more eminent degree. Perfections which are *purely* relative, purely *secundum quid*, neither formally nor eminently exist in God; they are only in Him as in His power to produce them, and are therefore said to be virtually in Him.[1] In this way God is made to contain the plenitude of the universe. His being is absolutely exhaustless in its contents, sufficient for Himself and sufficient for all the creatures.

Value of this truth.

Here, too, is a truth too mighty for the grasp of our intellects, and yet of the utmost consequence as a regulative principle of faith. It is this infinite fullness of God that makes Him the end and felicity of the creature. Poor in ourselves, without strength, without resources, feeble as a reed, and easily crushed before the moth, we are yet rich and valiant and mighty in God. We have treasures which can never be consumed, resources which can never be exhausted, and strength which can never fail. With the everlasting God as our refuge we can bid defiance to the universe besides. Though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, yet we need not fear. Nothing can be lost so long as God remains our friend. He is all in all.

Immutability.

V. We come now to consider the infinite and absolute with reference to the permanent identity of God's being, and this gives rise to the notion of immutability. Immutability is indeed only another form of asserting the simplicity and oneness of the infinite. That which never began and can never end, to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken, which knows no succession and is dependent upon nothing without, is evidently incapable of change. Change implies succession, and is possible only to a being conditioned by time; change implies causation, and is possible only to a being limited and dependent; change implies addition or

[1] Cf. Perrone, also De Moor, c. iv., § 18.

subtraction, and is possible only to the defective or superfluous. The complete, the perfect, is beyond its reach. Change is either from better to worse or from worse to better, and is grossly incompatible with the notion of the infinite, which contains the absolute fullness of perfection. This truth, self-evident in itself, if the notion of the infinite has even the negative validity which must certainly be assigned to it, is abundantly proclaimed in Scripture: "For I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."[1] "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end."[2] "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent; hath He said, and shall He not do it, or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good"?[3] "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."[4] "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."[5] "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart to all generations."[6]

Self-evident, yet also set forth in Scripture.

The absolute immutability of God seems to be contradicted by the fact of creation. A new relation was certainly superinduced. The answer commonly given is: Relations *ad extra* imply no change in the essence related; God acquires a new denomination, but no new accession to His being; the title Creator imports no addition to His nature; the only real change in the case takes place in the creatures which pass from nonentity to being. But the question is, whether there is not a modification of the Divine will in passing from non-

Does the fact of creation contradict it?

[1] Mal. iii. 6. [2] Ps. cii. 25, 26. [3] Num. xxiii. 19.
[4] James i. 17. [5] Heb. xiii. 8. [6] Ps. xxxiii. 11.

creation to creation. The universe began, and when it began by the fiat of the Almighty, was not His will differently determined from what it was before? This difficulty we conceive it impossible to answer. To say that He willed from eternity to create just when He did—that the purpose included the time and mode of its execution—does not solve the problem. A will to create and a will creating do not seem to be the same. It is true that the universe adds nothing to God and takes nothing from Him; but does not the creation of the universe imply a new determination of His will? This is one of the questions which remind us of our ignorance whenever we undertake to speculate on the absolute. We shall meet it again when we come to the doctrine of creation. In the mean time, let us be content to acknowledge that our powers are not commensurate with the domain of truth.

This question not to be solved, by reason of our ignorance.

It has also been contended that the Divine essence was modified by the incarnation of the Son. But the incarnation was only a new manifestation of God. It added nothing to the essence of the Logos, into Personal union with whom the humanity was apprehended.

The Divine essence not modified by the Incarnation,

The changes which take place in the universe are no proof of the mutability of God, for to will changes, and to change the will, are, as Turrettin[1] very justly remarks, very different things.

nor by any changes in the universe.

Those passages of Scripture which represent God as changing His mind or purpose, as repenting and regretting and grieving, are all to be interpreted as other anthropomorphisms. They express no change in God, but a change in the events of His providence—a change analogous to that which would be produced in us under the influence of these feelings. They are condescensions of the Divine Teacher to our narrow

Scriptures which ascribe change to God.

[1] Loc. iii., Qu. 11, § 7.

capacities; and as they are so thoroughly guarded from abuse, they are admirably adapted to give vivacity and emphasis to the real idea they are intended to convey. It is indeed one of the marks of the divinity of Scripture that it can thus venture to clothe God in the forms of earth without depressing His majesty or marring His glory. No human author could have ventured on such a style without incurring the certain risk of degrading the Almighty.

Foundation of all our hopes,

I need not add that the immutability of God is the foundation of all our hopes. It is here that the heirs of the promise have strong consolation. He can never deceive us in the expectations which He excites. He never falls short of, but often goes immeasurably beyond, what He had led us to expect. Here is the pledge of His faithfulness,—He can never change; His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. The impenitent, too, may be assured that, without a change in them, the threatenings of His word will be infallibly executed. He will by no means clear the guilty. He can never be induced to countenance or to tolerate sin. All efforts to secure His favour while we cling to our lusts are only insults to His character, which represent Him as capable of being soothed by flattery or bribed by rewards. It is the misery of sin that it makes God altogether such an one as we ourselves. It forgets His glory, and changes it into a lie.

and of all our fears.

It is immutable goodness and truth.

It is delightful, too, to think that the immutability of God is the immutability of wisdom and goodness and truth. It is no blind fate utterly regardless of all moral distinctions. It is rectitude itself ever abiding one and the same, and rendering to all according to their dues. Injustice can never enter the government of such a God. All will at length prove well.

I have now briefly and rapidly surveyed those attributes which characterize God as the Infinite and Absolute. I have contemplated Him in relation to the grounds, the duration, the extent, the contents and the identity of His being,

and have reached results which we are constrained to accept as facts, but which we are wholly incompetent to explain. These are the attributes which distinguish God; it is these which render every other perfection Divine. To deny any one of them is to deny all, and to reduce existence to the limited and contingent.

Disparity betwixt God and the creature.

I cannot close without pointing out the immeasurable disparity which this subject reveals between the most exalted creature in the universe and its infinite creator. The tallest angel has only a derived existence—it is absolutely dependent upon the will of God. It sprang from a cause, and subsists only in its cause. There was a time when it was not; it could again cease to be if God should so decree. Whatever increase it has made in knowledge, power or excellence, it is no nearer to independence to-day than when the light of consciousness was first kindled within it. But how different with God! He leans upon nothing. He lives no borrowed life. He asks no leave to be. He is because He is. His throne is stable as eternity. His being immovable as destiny. Strike out all the creatures, and He still is—glorious, holy, majestic and blessed as when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. The universe has added nothing to His bliss and can subtract nothing from His fullness. Think, too, of an underived knowledge—a knowledge which was never acquired; which came from no impressions from without; which admits of no reasoning, of no memory, of no succession of ideas! Whence came this knowledge? Thought reels and staggers at the problem, and can only answer that it is like His being, independent and original; He knows because He knows. Think, again, of its extent—all beings, all possible things, all the vicissitudes of all the histories of all worlds—the whole universe, with all its events from the first dawn of creation through the endless cycle of ages,—all this present to His infinite consciousness with an intuition easier and simpler than the simplest perception of sight. The ages are but an instant,

and creation but a point. How little are we compared with such a God! Think, too, of an underived power—a power to which there is nothing difficult; to which it is as easy to create a world as to move a feather, to uphold all things as to speak a word. The universe lies in His hands as nothing; the nations are the small dust of the balance. He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. He speaks and it is done, He commands and it stands fast. What is man, what is an angel, what is a seraph, compared to a being like this?

In the next place, let us consider the disparity in the duration of His existence. We are of yesterday, and know nothing; our age is but a span, our days but a hand-breadth. We come forth in the morning, disappear in the evening, and straight are seen no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the God that made us abides the same. Before time began He was; and when time shall cease He will still be. Nothing can touch His being, for Eternity is His dwelling-place. The earth has existed for ages which defy all calculation; it has witnessed stupendous changes; it is destined to witness more; yet there was a time when there was no earth, no sun, no moon, no stars, no angel, no man. But there never was a time when there was no God. We pass from infancy to age; we add month to month and year to year. But God has no age. He is no older now than millions and billions of years before time began to roll. In undecaying vigour He ever and ever abides. What a being is God!

Think, besides, of His immensity. Here we are confined to a spot of earth. Our being is limited to a narrow sphere. We cannot stretch ourselves to the regions beyond. We are fixed to our places. But where is the place of God? Where are the limits that circumscribe His being? Where is the point of space that eludes the scrutiny of His eye? Go to the eternal snows of the north, the burning deserts of the tropics; climb from world to world and from sun to sun; or sink even to the deep vault of hell—everywhere you shall meet God. It is His hand that sustains the mountains, His

breath that scorches the desert, and His arm that upholds the worlds. Surely we may ask with the Psalmist, What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? We are indeed as vanity and less than nothing in His sight.

Think, too, of His all-sufficiency, His infinite fullness, the boundless wealth of His being. He needs nothing. He has no occasion to go beyond Himself for absolute blessedness. In the person of the Trinity is a glorious society; in the infinite perfections of His essence is perfect good. He can receive nothing from the creature, for it is only a faint reflection of Himself. How different is man—poor, feeble, dependent man! We have nothing that we can call our own. The breath we breathe is borrowed; we live only as we are kept. The treasures we have to-day may be gone to-morrow; we are the sport of accident and chance. A straw can wound us, a fly can kill us. If you add to all this the immutability of God, and then consider our changing and fitful history, the contrast is complete betwixt us and the Author of our being.

Rebuke of arrogance, cavilling and murmurs.

With such an immense disparity how absurd in us to think of comprehending the plans of the Almighty! How arrogant to arraign His wisdom at our bar! We presume to sit in judgment upon His schemes, we question the arrangements of His providence, we cavil at the unequal distribution of His favours, we complain that the world might have been made better, and we murmur and repine when our own little plans are crossed or disappointed. But who are we that presume to rise against God? What wisdom is that which ventures to condemn the counsel of the Holy One? Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Let us learn the lesson of our ignorance, and where we cannot understand, let us not be tempted to censure or repine. It is enough that God does it. That word GOD is a guarantee that all is right.

LECTURE IX.

CREATION.

THE fact of creation is vital in Theology, as upon it depends the question of the relation betwixt the world and God, and even of the absoluteness and independence of the Divine Being. There are but five conceivable hypotheses upon which the relations of the finite and infinite can be adjusted. The *first* is that of the Atheists, which denies the existence of the infinite, and acknowledges the reality only of the world; the *second* is that of the Eleatics, which denies the existence of the world, and admits only the reality of the infinite; the *third* is that of the Pantheists, who admit both, but resolve them into unity by making them phenomenal modifications of the same substance; the *fourth* is that of the Dualists, who recognize two eternal substances, mind and matter, of which the one is essentially passive, the other active; and the *fifth* and last is that of a genuine Theism, which makes God the creator of the world, and makes the world a real thing, separate and distinct from God. We may here discount the first two hypotheses as having in our times no advocates who are entitled to much consideration. But it is clear that Dualism is inconsistent with the infinity and absoluteness of the Supreme Being. If matter exist independently of Him, His knowledge of its laws and properties has been acquired. He has had to learn them. His power, too, like that of man, is conditioned by the nature of the material upon which He has to work. Like ours it

Five conceivable hypotheses.

The first two discounted;

is the handmaid of knowledge, and consists in obedience to laws that He has discovered. The eternity of matter evidently, then, reduces God to the category of the finite, the limited, the conditioned. He ceases to be self-sufficient. He ceases, in other words, to be God. He may be a skilful workman, an admirable contriver, a wonderful mechanic, but all in consequence of acquired knowledge. He is a man on a large scale. Dualism, therefore, is disguised Atheism. Hence creation is invested with so much importance in the Scriptures. God is everywhere presented in them as the Creator of the world, and not as the skilful architect of nature. This hypothesis of Dualism may, consequently, be discounted as essentially Atheistic. The only scheme inconsistent with creation which remains is that of Pantheism. This is the prevailing tendency of modern philosophy. If we admit both the finite and the infinite, it is clear that they must either be the same or different. There is no medium. The Pantheist affirms that they are the same; the Theist that they are different. The Pantheist resolves the finite into a phenomenon of the infinite; it is its mode of appearing or of manifestation. The Theist affirms that it is a different thing—a real substance, separate and distinct from the eternal and infinite substance. The natural impressions of the mind are in favour of Theism. It is only the difficulties which are encountered in the problem of Creation that have driven modern speculation into Pantheism, as it drove the ancient philosophers into Dualism.

also the fourth.

Modern philosophy Pantheistic.

The fundamental postulate of Pantheism is that creation is impossible—that it is self-contradictory and absurd. Because of the impossibility of creation, and only because of it, has the hypothesis been invented which seems most naturally to account for the facts of consciousness in default of creation. If now this postulate of the Pantheist is rashly assumed, if it can be shown that creation involves no contradiction

Fundamental postulate of Pantheism.

and terminates in no absurdity, then it must be conceived as established. If speculation cannot refute it, as the most natural and consistent scheme it must be admitted. The question, therefore, which we have to resolve is simply whether creation is possible. Let us examine the process by which the Pantheist reaches a negative answer.

Outline of Pantheistic objections to creation.

1. Creation, it is said, involves the notion of making something out of nothing. It makes that to be which had no being before. *Nothing* is therefore a material upon which one works—a subject about which an agency is employed. Now this is self-contradictory. To be a material or subject of operation is already to be something. The maxim is self-evident that out of nothing nothing can be made. But if we look to our notion of *power*, we shall see that it excludes the notion of creation. We know power from its effects, and all effects with which we are acquainted are mere changes in existing objects. To produce without a pre-existing material, to work without something to work upon, is an anomaly which no experience either of what passes within or without us justifies us in asserting. In fact, we can attach no meaning to the words.

2. The second objection is drawn from the nature of God as implying plenitude of being. He is the sum-total of reality. As the fullness of being He must be one—He must exclude all other realities. If you admit the existence of another real being, separate and distinct from God, you might conceive that being added to God, and then God is not the all. As far forth as the other being has reality, God is wanting in *omnitude* of being. The all must be one, perfect and complete. Nothing can be added to it, nothing taken from it. Hence real existence admits no distinction of plurality and difference.

3. A third objection is drawn from the will of God. If creation be supposed, God created either necessarily or freely. If necessarily, then the world would seem to be part of Himself. There was no foreign impulse to determine His will,

and a necessity *ab intra* would seem to terminate upon His own being. Again, if the world be admitted as separate and distinct from God, a necessitating influence *ad extra* would be a determination of the Divine being inconsistent with His all-sufficiency and His unconditional absoluteness. It is the same as to condition Him from without.

But if this difficulty were obviated, we are perplexed to understand how the will of God can be determined to the contingent, the finite, the imperfect. If the world be a free product, its being limited and conditioned would make the limited and conditioned both objects of the Divine knowledge and of the Divine will, either of which would seem to imply an imperfection. We cannot understand how God can will anything but the infinite and eternal.

Further, if the will of God be eternal, the world must be eternal, or an interval has elapsed betwixt the will and the execution. That interval implies succession, consequently change, and consequently a denial of God's eternity. The will and its execution must co-exist. If the will existed only when creation began, then there was something new in God. Hence the world must be eternal. Besides, all duration is the same. There is no reason why creation should have taken place when it did, rather than earlier or later. No reason for preference can be found in the duration. Therefore, to select one point of time rather than another, when the claims of all time were exactly equal, is to attribute to God an arbitrary proceeding, a will without wisdom. Hence creation must be eternal. On the same ground it must be infinite in space. All the parts of space are equal. No motive can be conceived for selecting one part rather than another, and to avoid an empty choice we must project creation in the whole void.

Again, if God has freely created the world, He desired it. Will without motive is inconceivable. Upon this supposition we have two difficulties: (1.) That an infinitely perfect and blessed being should desire the imperfect and limited. This seems to us to be a degradation—a letting Himself down

from the heights of His felicity. (2.) If the world be not eternal, and yet has been an object of Divine desire, that desire, having been eternal, is a confession in God of eternal want. Hence, He is not all-sufficient.

Further still, the world has been created either perfect or imperfect. If perfect, it has fullness of being in itself, and there is no need for God. If imperfect, all the difficulties connected with a world beginning in time, limited in space, conditioned in being, emerge.

4. To these difficulties must be added those which spring from the existence of evil, of positive disorder, crime and misery in the world. These evils seem to be utterly inconsistent either with the benevolence or the omnipotence of God. He could either have prevented them or He could not. If He could have done it and refused, He is not absolutely good; if He would have done it but could not, He is not all-powerful. In either case He ceases to be God.

This is the brief outline of the arguments against the possibility of creation, as they are very clearly and felicitously stated by Jules Simon in his spirited little book on natural religion.[1]

Capital vice of all these arguments.

Of these four classes of arguments this general criticism may be made, that they labour under the capital vice of attempting to bring within the forms of the understanding what transcends the capacity of thought. They assume the infinite, the unconditioned, the absolutely perfect, as a thing about which we are as competent to speculate as the facts of experience. They bring it into the relations and under the conditions of our faculties of knowledge without being conscious that the very circumstance of subjecting it to these limitations destroys its nature. It is the infinite no longer if it is comprehended within the narrow sphere of human cogitation. What is apprehended as the infinite and reasoned upon as the infinite is a tissue of negations; which, the human mind accepting as positive elements of consciousness,

[1] Chapter iii.

becomes involved in an endless series of contradictions. Hence such absurdities are not arguments. They are only puzzles or logical riddles. They prove nothing but the impotency of reason, and the incompetency of philosophy to transcend with its logical forms the sphere of experience. It cannot be too strenuously insisted on that the infinite is believed, not known—that as existing it is a necessary affirmation of intelligence, a thing which we cannot but accept. But when we undertake to represent the object of this faith, we can only do it by recurring to the conditions under which it is awakened, and by divesting what is positively given of all limitations. This negation of limitations puts the object beyond the grasp of the understanding, and we are guilty of a gross paralogism when we reduce it to the forms and categories of our human thought. We may reason about it, but we cannot reason from it. Now in the question of creation the great difficulty is the coexistence of finite and infinite, the one and the many, the perfect and the imperfect. In attempting to adjust the relations betwixt them, we imperceptibly take for granted that we know the positive properties and attributes of the infinite, as we know the positive properties and attributes of the finite, whereas we know the infinite only as the negation of the finite. These negations we preposterously make positive. We confound, in other words, a *non-positing* of the infinite with a real *positing*, and setting out with a fundamental blunder, it is no wonder that every step should plunge us in deeper darkness. He that reasons upon *no* as if it were *yes*, must not be surprised at the perplexity of his conclusions.

They are but puzzles or logical riddles.

A detailed consideration of the difficulties alleged against the notion of creation will show that even in this point of view it will not suffer in comparison with Pantheism, or any other hypothesis touching the nature and origin of the world.

Reply in detail.

1. The objection that the idea of creation is self-contradictory and absurd, proceeds upon a double misconception.

First objection based on a double misconception.

It *first* assumes that *nothing* is a positive subject of operation —a real pre-existing material upon which power is exerted. It takes for granted that the preposition *ex* in the philosophic axiom *ex nihilo nihil fit*, represents the material cause. This is a gross mistake. *Nothing* is simply the term from which existence begins. The meaning is, that something now is where there was nothing before; that something, in other words, has begun to be. Creation is an energy of God, an effect of the Divine omnipotence, produced without the concurrence of any other principle. His power as infinite is without limits. It is, therefore, not restricted, like that of the creature, to the modification of a pre-existing material; it not only changes, but makes its objects. There is no more contradiction in the notion of power as giving being than there is in the notion of power as changing being. Both may be incomprehensible, but neither is absurd. The *second* error is, that the notion of power is determined to only one class of effects. It is true, experience presents us with no instances of power but those produced through the medium of motion. But the concept may be separated in thought from any specific form in which it is realized; it is simply that which produces effects without reference to their nature or the conditions under which it is exerted. Hence, creation as an effect is as clearly an instance of power as motion. It is, indeed, the highest exemplification of it. To say that God wills and a world follows, requires no other simple idea to understand it than is involved in the assertion, I will and my arm moves. The mode in which the power operates is different, but the idea of power is the same. In neither case do we understand the mode of operation. Because one is a matter of daily experience we confound familiarity with knowledge, and think we understand it when we do not. What power is in itself we are unable to conceive. It is a mystery in every form of its exhibition, and as we cannot grasp it in itself, it is perfectly preposterous to limit it to one class of effects. There is con-

sequently mystery, but no absurdity, no self-contradiction, in saying that the worlds were made by the power of God.

2. To the second objection, which makes creation contradict the plenitude of the Divine Being, it may be replied that the creature has no *reality* which it does not derive from God. Though separate and distinct from Him, it is not independent of Him. His will is the basis of all the reality it contains. Let that will be withdrawn, and it becomes nothing. Hence the whole sum of its being was in Him virtually and potentially before it existed, and creation, therefore, has neither added anything to Him nor to the amount of positive reality in the universe. God alone is equal in the sum of being to God *plus* the universe. But if this answer should not solve the difficulty, it may be retorted that pantheism encounters it in another and still more objectionable form. The world is a phenomenon of God, a modification of His being. The phenomenon has some *reality*, it has some kind of existence; otherwise nothing could be predicated of it. Now the appearance of the phenomenon either adds its own being to that of God, and then He was not absolutely perfect before; or it does not, and then there is some reality which cannot be affirmed of Him. The difficulty presses the Pantheist as sorely as the Theist, unless the Pantheist is prepared to maintain that His phenomenal modifications are pure nothings. The difficulty, in truth, is one which lies against every hypothesis which recognizes the All-perfect as one and simple and complete. To deduce the manifold and plural from the one and simple, to explain their coexistence without destroying unity, is a problem which the understanding cannot solve, whether the manifold and plural be that of thought, of phenomenon, or of finite substance. We have not the data for even apprehending the real nature of the problem—it embraces terms which transcend the limits of human speculation. The fundamental error is in taking for granted that we know the absolute in itself. The very fact that the difficulty attaches to all systems, shows

The second objection retorted.

that it is grounded in the impotency of human reason, and not in the nature of the things themselves, if we had the faculties to seize them in their essential reality.

Difficulties from knowledge and will of God not obviated by Pantheism.

3. In relation to the difficulty arising from the knowledge and will of God, it must first be remarked that this, like the preceding, is not obviated by adopting the scheme of the Pantheists. On the contrary, it assumes in that scheme the appearance of a series of positive contradictions. The limited, contingent, imperfect is made a part of God; it pertains to the very essence of the Divine nature. God does not realize the fullness of His own being without those phenomenal modifications of weakness and imperfection which it is supposed to be incredible that He should create. He can possess them in Himself, and yet be infinite; but He cannot make them, as substances separate from Himself, without ceasing to be God. Betwixt the two propositions, God creates the finite and God is the finite, there is no comparison as to the difficulties that they respectively involve. One is encumbered with perplexities, the other with absurdities. The real difference, in this matter, between the Theist and the Pantheist is, that one refers all weakness and imperfection to a creature that is not God; the other places them in God himself. But, in the next place, we must

It transcends our powers to comprehend or reason about Divine knowledge and will.

remember that we are incapable of conceiving the nature of Divine knowledge or the operation of the Divine will. What God's consciousness is, how subject and object in Him are related, how He knows, we are unable even to conjecture. We can think of His knowledge only in the terms of human consciousness. We distinguish the subject and object. Now if the object of Divine knowledge be Himself, it is certainly infinite, and there is no difficulty;—if Himself, the infinite, virtually and potentially contains the finite—that, as included in Himself, must fall within the sphere of His consciousness, considered as infinite. There is no more difficulty in God's knowing the finite than there is in the

existence of the finite, whatever form it take, whether of substance or phenomenon. The knowledge of the infinite includes all that the infinite can produce, whether as modification or real being. The difficulty, therefore, subsides into that of the possibility of the finite, as fact.

In regard to the will of God, it is evident that He Himself must be the beginning and the end of all His determinations. He must act from Himself and for Himself. We cannot conceive that the finite has been chosen for its own sake—that the will of God terminates upon it as the last end. Such a procedure would indeed be a degradation.

Grounds upon which we can conceive God might choose to create.

But it is possible that there may be in the finite, as an object of the Divine will, relations to the infinite which justify its creation as a transcendent proof of wisdom and goodness. It may be that these very perfections have determined the production of the universe of creatures, and therefore that the finite is willed only on account of the infinite. It may be, too, that a goodness which delights to communicate itself, and creates worlds that it might flow out upon them in holiness and joy, as it exists in an infinite being may be compatible with the most perfect self-sufficiency and self-beatitude and blessedness. God is not rendered more holy and more blessed in making creatures to behold His glory and taste His love, but it may be that a nature perfectly blessed may freely choose to impart bounties. It may be that infinite goodness has nothing approximating to selfishness. We cannot reason from mere metaphysical grounds in relation to a moral being. The question turns here upon higher principles than the mere balancing of the amounts of entity or substance. The true end of the creation, and therefore the true motive of the Divine will, must be sought in a higher and nobler sphere than that of mere being. The difficulties which emerge to speculation in one sphere disappear before morality in another.

The will of God as eternal does not by any means involve an eternal creation. It implies an eternal decree to create—

The decree to create and its execution not co-existent.

that is, an eternal decree to begin time. The execution of a decree may not be co-existent with its formation, and yet the interval imply no change. Otherwise there could be no succession of events at all. The argument goes the whole length of affirming that all things must be simultaneous, or they are not the objects of the Divine will. As to the notion that all the parts of duration and space are equal, that there is no motive for choosing between them, and that consequently creation must be unlimited in both respects,—it proceeds upon the assumption that time and space are real things, and not the logical conditions of existence. To those who deny them any reality, there is no difficulty; to those who regard them as real, the difficulty arises, but it may be resolved into the incomprehensibility which attaches to the nature of the Divine will.

Objections to creation from the existence of evil not diminished, but aggravated, by Pantheism.

4. The fourth class of objections drawn from the existence of evil is less formidable upon the scheme of Theism than that of Pantheism. God, according to the partisans of creation, is not the subject of evil; it exists separate and apart from Him. The Pantheist lodges it in His own nature. He is, if not evil, yet far from being the absolutely good. The truth is, Pantheism is obliged to repudiate all moral distinctions. Right and wrong are reduced to the contrasts of nature out of which is evolved universal harmony. The bad is as necessary as the good. The proportions of the universe equally demand both. If evil appears as disorder, it is only from our partial view of it. If we could take in the whole scene of things, we should perceive that the perfection of the whole would suffer without it. In this broad contradiction to the dictates of our moral nature we see that Pantheism not only removes no difficulties in the notion of creation, but that it introduces absurdities and paradoxes which defy the possibility of unsophisticated assent. It annihilates man's highest distinction, prostrates his noblest hopes and chills his warmest aspira-

tions. He has no real being—he is only a shadow projected for a moment upon the surface of the infinite, soon to vanish and disappear for ever. He is to be absorbed in the all-comprehending substance. His individual, personal consciousness must perish; immortality is a more stupendous contradiction than creation. Shadows we are, shadows we pursue; as shadows we are cheated, and as shadows we must finally be dissolved. These are the propositions which are so plain, so simple, so comprehensible that we are invited to exchange for them the doctrine of a real existence, a real destiny, a real immortality, a real heaven or hell;—so obvious that to find these we must be willing to lose ourselves.

The Pantheistic hypothesis rests upon the assumption that the world has no substantive reality, or that it is not a separate and distinct thing. The metaphysical subtleties by which this paradoxical scheme has been supported have all originated from inattention to the limits of human knowledge, and from a desire to know what transcends the reach of our faculties. The true procedure of philosophy is to inquire what are the deliverances of consciousness, to accept these as ultimate principles, and to regulate our conclusions by these data. If we take this method, the controversy can soon be brought to a close.

Pantheism overthrown by the deliverances of consciousness.

1. Consciousness unequivocally avers that the world has a real, separate, substantive being. It is the universal faith of the race. Pantheism, the highest form of idealism, is a speculation of the schools, and can never be carried out into practical life. It is a species of skepticism which we may persuade ourselves to adopt as a conclusion of philosophy, but which we can never realize as a fact of experience. In every case of external perception we are conscious of two things—of ourselves as percipient subjects, of the external world as a perceived object. We know them both, and we know them both as real existences. They stand in contrast

The first is that the world has a real, separate existence.

to each other, and their distinction in the act of perception is but the reflection of their distinction in reality of being. They are both cognized under that intrinsic law of existence by which alone we recognize a substance. Consciousness, therefore, reveals matter as substance, mind as substance, and each as distinct from and contrasted with the other. To repudiate the testimony of consciousness is to repudiate the possibility of knowledge; it is to annihilate all intelligence. The universality of this conviction proves it to be natural; the impossibility of divesting ourselves of it as a practical conviction confirms the inference. Either, then, consciousness is false, and all knowledge impossible, or mind and matter are real, distinct, separate, substantive beings.

2. Subject and object, mind and matter, as revealed in consciousness, though real substances, are limited, conditioned, dependent. They reciprocally condition each other. They are bounded by time and space. The world presents an aspect of mutability, a successive influence of cause and effect, a constant interchange of action and reaction. Its history is a history of vicissitudes. The world is finite. This is as clearly the testimony of consciousness as that the world exists. It has no principle in it that resists succession and change. On the contrary, it is bound to time, which necessarily implies both.

The second is, that the world is finite.

3. These two facts, that the world exists and that the world is finite, imply another, that the world must have begun. A succession without beginning is a contradiction in terms. It is equivalent to eternal time. A being of whose existence time is the law cannot be eternal. But time is the law of all finite existence; therefore, none can be eternal. Or, to put the argument in another form: an infinite series of finite things is a contradiction. According to the hypothesis, everything in the series had a beginning, but the series itself had none—that is, what is true of all the parts is not true of the whole. A chain without a first

From these two proceeds the third, that the world had a beginning.

link is impossible, but a first link annihilates the notion of eternal being. The world therefore had a beginning.

4. Having reached this point, we are led to an inevitable disjunction. If it had a beginning, it began spontaneously—that is, had an absolute commencement, or it sprang from a cause. An absolute commencement is not only inconceivable, but contradictory to that great law of intelligence which demands for every new appearance a cause. The world, therefore, must have been caused, but a cause which begins existence, creates. The world, therefore, must have been created.

The fourth is, it had a cause.

In this argument we have done nothing but reproduce the facts of consciousness, and unfold explicitly what they implicitly contain. They give us a real world, subject to the law of time, which must have begun, and must therefore have had a creator.

This deduction is so simple and natural that it may seem strange that the reality of creation has ever been called in question. The wonder will disappear when we call to mind what the history of philosophy so abundantly illustrates, that the tendency of speculation has ever been to explain the incomprehensible, and thus to lose itself in contradictions to the most palpable deliverances of consciousness. Instead of looking into consciousness, and accepting its primitive utterances as ultimate and supreme, they have been turned into propositions to be proved; and as, from the nature of the case, no proof could be given, and as their denial would involve intelligence in a war upon itself, the result has been the doubt in relation to matters which would have been perfectly obvious if speculation had not obscured them. Hence the denial of an external world; of personal identity; of the immortality of the soul; of moral distinctions; of the being of God. These are all fundamental elements of reason—a part of the natural faith of mankind; and, practically, nature has always asserted them in defiance of the sophistries of a perverse philosophy.

Speculation has ever tended to contradict the facts of consciousness.

For ages, philosophers, instead of interpreting aright the fact of consciousness in external perception, laid it down as a first principle that the object known was different from the object perceived. This crotchet, accepted without examination and transmitted in different forms, was never questioned until it brought forth the fruit of universal skepticism. In the same way, the principle that out of nothing nothing can be made—true only in relation to nothing as efficient cause—has been universally applied to nothing as material cause, or *terminus a quo*, and has not only excluded the possibility of creations, but contains in its bosom the seeds of absolute atheism. As, in the one case, the testimony of nature was silenced by a dogma, so in the other; and as, in the one case, nature made reprisals by plunging the understanding in hopeless darkness, so in the other it inflicts the yet greater curse of leaving us without a God.

The fifth is, that the Creator is eternal and necessary.

5. There is still another step which we are authorized to take. As the finite is limited to time, and as time begins with the finite, the being who creates must be independent of time. That the first creature should have been made by a finite being, is equivalent to saying that time was before it began. It is, therefore, a contradiction in terms to attribute all beginning to the begun. The Creator therefore must be eternal and necessary. The first act of creation is the sole prerogative of such a being. But are we authorized to say that no creature can, under any circumstances, create? Are we authorized to say that no new beings can now begin from the agency of others who have also begun? There is evidently a difference between the first beginning and any subsequent commencements. It does not follow that because creation in the first instance is limited to God, that therefore it must always be restricted to Him. But there is another aspect in which this conclusion presents itself as little less than self-evident. To create and to annihilate are expressions of the same kind of power—they are both equally ex-

God only can create,

or annihilate.

pressions of omnipotence; that is, they are expressions of power unlimited and unconditioned. To annihilate, so far from implying subjection to any conditions of actions, destroys them all. It removes time, empties space, abolishes substance, and leaves nothing to be conditioned. This, surely, is inconsistent with the notion of the finite. The power to abolish all conditions is the power to be infinite. But creation is just the reversed view of annihilation. Creation makes the transition from nothing to something; annihilation makes the transition from something to nothing. They are correlated as altitude and depth. Now if the power to annihilate be contradictory to the notion of a creature, the same must be true of the power to create. Divines have illustrated the infinitude of power involved in creation by representing the distance betwixt something and nothing as infinite. They are contradictory opposites, and no being can bridge the abyss which separates them but the infinite God.

All finite power is limited to obedience to the laws of nature. It is conditioned by the properties and attributes of the substances upon which it operates. These substances must be given as a pre-existing material, and the creature can then work within the limits of the capabilities of the subject. This limitation to the properties and laws of existing substances seems to be the characteristic distinction of finite agency. Hence, all that it achieves is to arrange, combine, change, modify. It produces new effects only by adjustments, which bring into play, in new forms, the forces of nature. Beyond these conditions it can never pass. Hence, creation as an unconditioned exercise of power; as requiring neither material, instrument, nor laws; as transcending change, modifications, or adjustments of existing things, is the sole prerogative of God. It is His to create as it is His to destroy. The principle is vital in theology. If creatures could create, the universe would not be, or might not be, a revelation of God. These heavens and this earth, our own

This principle is vital in theology,

bodies and souls, might have been the products of being as dependent as ourselves. The great decisive proof of revelation, involved in the idea of miraculous power as the exclusive prerogative of God, would be swept away. A miracle would cease to be the infallible credential of a Divine Messenger. Revealed and Natural Religion would be put in equal jeopardy. But the truth is so obvious that creative power belongs only to God that it has commanded the testimony of the race, with a few partial exceptions, and that in forms of the strongest assurance. The very fact that philosophers have denied the possibility of creation is a pregnant proof that they regarded it as involving a power even transcending that of God. The few who have ventured to suggest that a creature might create have affirmed, at the same time, that he could create only as the instrument of God; and even in that case very few have been willing to say that the power could be habitual and resident in it. It may, therefore, be taken as the universal faith of mankind that creation cannot be the work of a creature. It is the prerogative of God, and of God alone.

and fundamental in the evidences of Christianity.

LECTURE X.

MAN.

CALVIN has very properly remarked that true wisdom essentially consists in the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves. Each is indispensable to the other. All the positive notions which we frame of the attributes of God are derived from the properties of our own souls, and without some just apprehension of our own nature, capacities and destiny the conception of religion becomes unintelligible. We must know ourselves in order to know aught else aright.

Man a microcosm.

That man is the centre in which, so far as this lower world is concerned, all the lines of creation converge and meet, that he is the crowning glory of God's sublunary workmanship, is evident alike from the peculiarities of his being and from the inspired history of his production. He unites in himself the two great divisions of the creature—persons and things; he is at once subject and object, mind and matter, nature and spirit. He has elements which work under the blind and necessitating influence of law—which enter into the chain of causes and effects extending through all the impersonal universe; he has other elements which mark the intelligent and responsible agent, which separate him from the whole sphere of mechanical agencies, and stamp him with the dignity and the high prerogative of intelligence and freedom. All the forms of life which are distributed among other creatures are concentrated in him. He has the growth and assimilating properties of the plant, the motion and

spontaneous properties of the animal, and to these he adds the sublimer endowments of personality and reason. He is, therefore, a representation, a miniature embodiment of all other creatures. He is the *kosmos* upon a small scale; the whole creation finds its counterpart in him; he contains the fullness of created being. The history of his creation completely accords with this account of his position. He was the last of God's works, and the Almighty proceeded to his formation with a solemnity of counsel that indicated the place he was destined to occupy in the scale of being. "Let us make man," is a formula of consultation employed in the production of no other creature. Then, earth and heaven are laid under tribute to furnish the materials. His body is curiously and wondrously wrought from the clay, and life is infused into him from the breath of the Almighty. He became a living soul. We are not to suppose that the process of forming the body was completed, and that then the endowment of reason was imparted. There was no interval between the organization of the one and the infusion of the other. They were simultaneous operations. Man became a living soul in the very process of receiving the body so wonderfully and beautifully made.

As thus deliberately made, thus strangely mingling heaven and earth, he is fitted to occupy a place in which he shall represent God to the creatures and the creatures to God. He is fitted to collect all those traces of Divine wisdom and goodness which are so conspicuous in the works of the Divine Hand, and to render to the Supreme Architect, as the high priest of nature, the tribute of praise which the creatures can reflect, but cannot express. Hence he is destined to exercise dominion over them. He becomes their lord. Through him and for him they accomplish the end of their being—they are for him as he is for God.[1]

But it is necessary to take a more detailed view of those excellencies which give to man his dignity and pre-eminence. We shall consider, first, those peculiarities which distinguish

[1] Kurtz, Bib. and Ast., p. 152.

Threefold division of the subject.

him as man, and without which he could not be regarded as belonging to the species. We shall then consider his condition when he came from the hands of his Maker; and, thirdly, the destiny which he was required to achieve.

Man essentially a person.

I. His distinguishing characteristics as man may be summed up in the attributes of reason and of will, or intelligence and freedom. Or the whole may be expressed in the single term *person*. All other terrestrial creatures are things. They live in the sphere of blind impulses and successive impressions. Their spontaneity is a mere force, and their consciousness is only a continued series of perceptions or sensations, without any distinct affirmation of a self or reflective contrast of subject and object. Brutes do not know; they only feel. They are conscious of this or that impression, but they are not conscious of themselves. They can never say *I* or *Thou*. Now in order that sense and the phenomena of sense may yield knowledge, there must be a principle which reduces all these perceptions and sensations to a conscious unity. We must recognize them as ours, as belonging to us, and we must recognize them as proceeding from objects which are not ourselves. But in addition to this, there must be conceptions which constitute the forms into which all individual experiences are cast and under which they are arranged. These forms or categories or concepts generalize the singular, unite the manifold, and make experience the parent of a fixed and abiding knowledge. These concepts or categories or regulative principles of reason are the indispensable conditions of intelligence; there can be no thought without them. Judgment can only realize itself in and through them. Take away such notions as those of unity, of plurality, of difference, identity, equality, cause, uniformity, and it would be impossible to compare our individual impressions or to attain to the conception of general laws. All knowledge is just the application of the primitive concepts of the understanding to the materials of

sense or consciousness. When we pass beyond the sphere of experience, and demonstrate the existence of the supersensible, it is by the aid of primitive beliefs which constitute the very substratum of intelligence. Now these primitive concepts, whether they exist as faith or as mere regulative forms of thought, are the essence of reason. They make knowledge and experience to be possible. By these man knows, and by these he extends his knowledge beyond the sphere of sense. He draws the distinction betwixt truth and falsehood. This is the first office of reason. The word *truth*, the word *error* or *falsehood*, would be altogether unmeaning to the brute. But reason also draws the line between right and wrong, between a duty and a crime. Reason, in the form of a conscience, gives us the concepts of rectitude, of obligation, of merit and demerit. It prescribes a law to the will, to the impulses, the appetites and all our springs of action, and constitutes man a moral and responsible creature. He has a will which is capable of being influenced by the declarations of reason, and which, as it acts in obedience to reason, elevates our impulses into a higher sphere, and gives them a dignity to which the appetites of an animal can lay no claim. By virtue of the joint possession of reason and will man is able to love and hate. The brute can do neither. Love is not mere desire; it is not blind attachment or headstrong passion; it is founded in the perception and the embrace of the good. It is will determined by intelligence. It is, therefore, a rational principle. Brutes cannot hate; they may have ferocity and violence, but they have no malice. That is a will perverted from reason, divorced from intelligence and enslaved to selfishness. So all the passions—pride, envy, charity, compassion as a principle—are conditioned upon the possession of reason and will. These attributes, therefore, are essential to humanity. They make man a person. Through them he has rights, is susceptible of society, recognizes truth and duty, and is an intelligent, moral, responsible being, and not a thing.

Reason and will distinguish humanity,

These attributes involve the existence of a principle in man which cannot be resolved into any modifications of matter. They involve the substantive existence of a soul. The distinction betwixt soul and body turns upon the conscious difference of their respective attributes. We know substance only in and through its properties, and where the properties are contradictory opposites we are compelled to infer that the substances cannot be the same. Thought and extension have no points in common. Matter is essentially divisible, consciousness essentially indivisible. The same reasoning will prove this soul to be naturally immortal—that is, incapable of destruction by any natural causes. The simplicity of its being precludes dissolution, and that is the only form of destruction with which we are acquainted. God, it is true, may annihilate the soul; it has no life in itself. But we have no reason to believe that anything which has ever been called into being will ever cease to be, and whatever God has rendered incapable of discerption, we are to infer that He designs shall always exist in the same form.

and involve a soul in man.

It has been debated in the schools whether the three-fold life of man, sensitive, animal and rational, is the result of the same spiritual substance in its union with the body, or whether each is the manifestation of a different immaterial principle. We are certainly not to multiply causes beyond necessity. The higher forms of creation seem to take up into themselves the principles of the lower. The life of the vegetable is taken up into the life of the animal, as a fuller expansion of the principle of life; and so reason in union with the body contains the life of the animal. The same soul may manifest itself under different conditions in different forms; it may have a higher and a lower sphere. The question, however, belongs to physiology rather than religion. Whatever answer we give to it, the essential properties of man remain still the same.

Immortality vindicated apart from Scripture.

The immortality of the soul, apart from the positive teaching of Scripture, may be vindicated upon the following grounds:

1. It is the natural and spontaneous sentiment of mankind. It has never been denied except by philosophers, and that on speculative grounds. It is the universal sentiment of the race.

2. It follows from the simplicity of the soul—the indivisible unity of consciousness.

3. It flows from the sense of responsibility, which is always a prospective feeling.

4. It flows from the nature of knowledge and from the nature of virtue. (The Socratic argument.)

5. From the insufficiency of the speculative grounds on which the contrary hypothesis is maintained—That death will destroy us; that our identity is lost when a portion of our being is gone.

6. The *onus probandi* is on the other side.

II. Having considered the essential properties of man, we come now to inquire into the condition in which he came from the hands of his Creator. Was he introduced into the world in the maturity of his powers, with habits of knowledge and virtue and language, or was he framed in an infantile state, simply with capacities of acquiring knowledge, virtue and language, but destitute of any actual possession of any of them?

Was man created an infant or in maturity?

This question becomes important in consequence of the efforts of Pelagians to escape from the doctrine of original sin, and the distinctions of the Papists in consequence of which some loop-hole is left for the doctrine of free-will. The theory is, that man was created *in puris naturalibus*—that is, he was created in the possession of all those attributes and properties which distinguish him as a species, and without which he could not be man, but destitute of all the habits and accomplishments

Pelagian and Popish theories.

In puris naturalibus.

which perfect and adorn his nature. He had sense, reason and freedom of will, but these existed in the form of capacities, and not of developed energies. It is particularly maintained that he had no holy habits; the Pelagians affirming that all holiness had to be the acquirement of his own free-will, and that he was framed indifferent to rectitude or sin; the Papists maintaining that holiness was superadded to him as a supernatural endowment. It belongs not to the sphere of nature, but to the higher sphere of grace. In either case, original sin is reduced to very small proportions. Upon the Pelagian scheme it is totally denied; we are all born as blank in relation to character as Adam was made. Upon the Popish hypothesis, it is rather a loss of something above nature than a corruption of nature itself. Holiness was a garment in which Adam was clothed *after* his creation, but was no part of the furniture that belonged to him as a creature. Original sin is the removal of the garment and the reduction of the race to its primitive nudity. The difference, according to Bellarmin, betwixt Adam in Eden and his descendants is the difference betwixt a clothed man and a stripped man. Now, in opposition to this theory, reason and the Scriptures concur in teaching that the first man must have been created in comparative maturity, with his faculties expanded by knowledge, his will charged with rectitude, and his whole nature in unison with his moral and personal relations. He was not an infant, but a man. His mind was not a blank, but a sheet well inscribed with Divine instructions. He was created in a state that harmonized at once with all his duties, and enabled him to fulfil his high vocation as the representative of God to the creatures and of the creatures to God. He was in actual possession of knowledge, righteousness and true holiness.

Adam not created an infant, either in mind or in body.

1. The hypothesis that man was created an infant in mind cannot be carried out without the most violent and incredible suppositions. It postulates a series of miracles, protracted through years of his existence, out of keeping with the whole

analogy of Divine Providence. Man's body was either fully developed, or that also was the body of an infant. If it were fully developed, then it had the strength and compactness of maturity and growth. Now an infant mind in a matured body can consist with the preservation of life only by a constant miracle. The infant knows nothing of the properties of matter; has not yet learned to judge of distance by the eye, or to determine the magnitude, hardness and solidity of bodies by the eye. It cannot calculate the direction of sounds by the ear, and it knows nothing of their significancy. It is a stranger to its own strength. It has no discernment of the qualities of food and poison. It would have to learn the use of its senses—to acquire by slow experience all those cognitions which we now acquire in our early years, and which have become so habitual that we mistake them for immediate and original perceptions. In this condition of helpless ignorance it would run against the hardest obstacles; be liable to pitch down the steepest precipices; mistake poison for food; and expose itself without apprehension to the greatest dangers. The life of such a being could not be preserved for a single day without a perpetual miracle. Its matured body would be a curse to it. The incongruity of such a constitution is sufficient to stamp it with incredibility. But if we suppose that the body of the first man was that of an infant, then we have to postulate a miraculous guardianship through the whole period of its being, from the first moment of creation until it has reached maturity of knowledge. God would have to be to it a nursing mother and a protecting father. It would have to be miraculously fed, miraculously nursed, miraculously guarded, until it acquired the habits and experience necessary to enable it to take care of itself. In the present order of providence, infant minds are put in infant bodies; and the body is not allowed to reach the power of self-motion until the mind has acquired the skill to direct it. We are prevented from walking until we have sense enough to walk with some safety. We are put under the guardianship of parents and

friends, and their experience supplies our deficiencies until we have laid in a stock of our own. The matured body always implies the matured mind. It is clear therefore, from the nature of the case and from the analogy of providence, that if Adam were created in maturity of body, he must also have been created in maturity of mind. But maturity of mind consists in habits of knowledge. It is knowledge which makes mind grow and expand. There is no difficulty in supposing that the first man was created with the knowledge resident in him that we acquire by slow experience. When he first looked upon the world he had the use of senses, as we learn it, and he thus derived, at once, all those impressions which we deduce by long habits of association. To this extent he must have had knowledge, or he could hardly have lived an hour.

Adam not created indifferent to holiness and sin.

2. Incredible as the supposition is of a pure nature without habits of knowledge, it is not so absurd as the supposition of a pure moral nature without habits of righteousness. There is no middle betwixt sin and holiness. Every moral being must be either holy or sinful; there is no such state as that of indifference. The will is, from the very nature of the case, under formal obligation to coincide with the moral law. There is no moment of time when this obligation does not hold. It must, therefore, in order that the man may not be guilty, incline to that law, so that, in all concrete cases, it shall choose the right. Hence, to say that man had simply the capacity to become holy or sinful, but that at his creation he was neither, is to say that there was a time, an interval of his being, when he was under no moral obligation, and therefore an interval of his existence when he had neither reason nor will; that is, it is a plain self-contradiction. To be indifferent to rectitude is itself sin. Hence, it is clear that man must have had determinate moral habits of some sort, and could not be produced *in puris naturalibus*. An infant now has a determinate moral character. It may not actually have sinned in specific voluntary acts, but its will is im-

bued with the law of sin, and as soon as it wills it wills wrong.

Indirect testimony of Scripture.

3. The Scripture testimonies upon this subject may be reduced to two heads, direct and indirect—those which explicitly state what the condition of man really was, and those which obviously imply it. Let us consider the indirect first:

Adam had language in its perfection.

(1.) Man is represented as in possession of language. Now language without thought is impossible. It becomes necessary in the higher spheres of thought, so that all inference beyond particulars is conditioned upon its existence. Adam had language in its most difficult and complicated relations. His words were not merely proper names, or expressive of single, individual phenomena. They were generic terms, and implied the distribution of the objects of creation into corresponding classes. "And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field." To suppose that he appropriated a name to each individual as its own distinctive title is simply preposterous. His vocabulary would have to be boundless and his memory equally marvellous. The plain meaning is, that he knew them and named them as genera and species. The notion of an infant conducting such a process is fit only for those who have not yet ceased to be infants themselves.

Eve created a mature woman.

(2.) In the next place, Eve was evidently framed in full maturity as a woman. She was recognized by Adam at once as a fit and worthy companion. Now the argument from this circumstance is twofold: If Eve were created in such maturity as to be a suitable help for man, why not Adam have been created in corresponding perfection? But Eve was created on the same day with Adam. He must, therefore, have marvellously developed in a few hours if he could so soon acquire language, learn the distribution of animals and come to a sense of his own need of society. If Eve had been created in the infancy of either mind or body, and he

had been mature, she would have been a burden and not a companion. If he had been still in the ignorance and imbecility of infancy, he would not have known that he wanted an associate. Hence, on either supposition the narrative becomes contradictory and absurd. But admit the maturity of Adam as to mind and body, and the whole story becomes simple and consistent. No one, in fact, can read the account of the creation of the first pair without being struck with the impression that they are treated from the very first as beings who have the use of their reason, and who are fully at home in their new circumstances and relations. They understand the scene in which they are placed. They are not children, but adults—endowed not with capacities only, but with the knowledge that enlarges and exercises them.

They received a commission involving their maturity.

(3.) The command to the first pair, "to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," becomes absolutely ludicrous if conceived as addressed to infants or children. It implies a complicated and extensive knowledge—a knowledge of the creatures and a knowledge of God, and a knowledge of themselves—as the indispensable condition of understanding, much more of fulfilling, the Divine mandate. All finite power is exerted through knowledge, and as the dominion of man was to be the dominion of intelligence and reason, it implied an apprehension of the nature and relations of the objects to which it extended.

These three circumstances—that man is represented as in possession of language and the knowledge which language necessarily symbolizes; that he felt his need of companionship on the very day of his creation and received a help suited to his wants; and that he received a commission involving a very high degree of intelligence in order to convey any meaning to his mind—are grounds from which we may confidently conclude that man was not created in a state of pure nature; that he was something more than a

realization of the logical essence of the species. He must have had the accidents which though logically separable can never be separated in every degree from his nature.

Adam not a rude savage.

(4.) The general tenor of the narrative contradicts, too, the notion that in his primitive condition he was a savage, rude and uncivilized, devoted to sensual indulgences and ignorant of a higher end. The knowledge of the creatures which he possessed, enabling him to classify and distinguish them, far transcends in its extent and accuracy the rough and palpable discriminations of the savage. His relish of companionship shows a development of social ties which is of the very essence of refined life. And his commission to multiply and replenish the earth, and to make nature the obedient minister of his will, implies a state of mind exactly the reverse of that which delights in war and destruction, and in which the only monuments of power that are prized are monuments of ruin. The command implies a spirit of love to the species and of regard to the other creatures of God totally incompatible with the fierce and vindictive passions that characterize savage life. Adam, in the picture of Moses, was no barbarian. He is the loving father of the posterity contained in his loins, the tender and affectionate husband, and the considerate master of this lower world. His mission is to bless and not to blast, to promote and not destroy the happiness of his subjects. These are the impressions which the narrative makes apart from any express and positive declarations as to the state and condition of man. This is their general and pervading import.

These testimonies not definite as to Adam's knowledge or holiness.

4. But evidently as these considerations refute the notion of an infantile or savage commencement of the race, they are not sufficient to give us precise and definite information in relation to the condition of the first man. They show him to have been intelligent, refined and civilized, but they do not reveal to us the extent of his know-

ledge, nor the degree of perfection which as a moral being he enjoyed.

Upon the first point the Scriptures are not definite,

(1.) Upon the first point the Scriptures are nowhere explicit. They leave us in the dark as to the amount of natural knowledge—that is, the amount of knowledge in relation to the objects and laws of the universe—which he possessed. It was substantially what every man who reaches maturity must acquire from experience. The naming of the whole animal creation would seem to intimate that it was much more. It is useless to speculate without data, and where we have only hints we should not push our conclusions beyond them. We should avoid the extreme of considering Adam as endowed with faculties which intuitively penetrated into the whole scheme of the universe, and laid the treasures of all human science at his feet, while we insist upon the maturity of reason which must have pertained to him. The Scholastics erred in attributing to him too much; the Socinians and many modern divines have equally erred in attributing to him too little.

but upon the second very explicit.

(2.) But in reference to his moral condition the Scriptures are very explicit. They have left no room for doubt. His primitive state is represented as a state of integrity, in which every part of his constitution was adapted to the end for which he was created. This is what is meant when it is said that he was made upright. As the end of his creation was moral, he must have possessed the knowledge and the dispositions which were necessary to the attainment of it. As the moral law bound him from the first pulsation of his life, that law must have been impressed upon his nature, and his first acts of consciousness must have been in conformity with its spirit. It must have been written upon his heart; it must have formed an original element of his being. That this was the case is articulately taught in all those passages which represent him as bearing in his primitive condition "the image of God." The proper explication of this phrase will explain

"The image of God" has two senses.

the perfection of his moral state. A slight examination will show that it is used in a looser or stricter sense. In a looser sense it indicates those spiritual properties which belong to man as a person—the faculties of intelligence, conscience and will. But a close inspection will show that even in the passages in which the phrase is thus loosely taken there lies at the foundation a tacit reference to the other and stricter meaning. For example, in Gen. ix. 6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man;" the argument manifestly turns upon the moral nature of man, the rights which consequently accrue to him, and the perfection which he is precluded from attaining by premature death. So James exposes the wickedness of cursing our fellow-men because they are made after the similitude of God—that is, moral perfection is their destiny, that to which they should aspire, and of which they are capable. The reason that the phrase is transferred to our spiritual and personal nature apart from any direct implication of positive holiness, is that this nature is the indispensable condition of holiness; it is the subject in which that must inhere. Hence it has been called the natural or fundamental image of God; it is the condition on which alone man can realize that image. But the strict and proper acceptation of the phrase is holiness—holiness of nature, or habitual holiness, as contradistinguished from specific exercises or acts. The decisive passages are Eph. iv. 23, 24; Col. iii. 10. From these passages we learn that the image of God consists generally in true holiness, and that this holiness, as the universal spirit or temper of the man, manifests itself in knowledge and righteousness. It is that state of mind which produces these results. To define it more accurately we must ascertain the meaning of the terms *knowledge* and *righteousness*, as here used by the apostle. Here we are at no loss. It is the knowledge of God which results in faith, love and true

The strict and proper sense is holiness, manifested in knowledge and righteousness.

religion. It is, in other words, a spiritual perception of His beauty, excellence and glory. Adam, as endowed with this knowledge, looked abroad upon the creation and saw what science with all its discoveries so often fails to discern—the traces of the Divine glory. He saw God in all above, beneath, around. Nature was a vast mirror, reflecting the Divine beauty, and as he saw he loved and adored. God to him was everywhere present; the whole universe was full of his name. It was written upon the starry vault, the extended plain, the lofty mountain, the boundless sea; upon every living thing, from the reptile that creeps upon the ground or the tiny insect that flutters in the breeze, to the huge leviathan or his own noble frame and nobler soul. The first light of day that beamed upon his eyes was accompanied with a richer light that radiated from his soul, and clothed all nature in the garb of Divine beauty and loveliness. He knew God with a spiritual discernment as a being to be loved, feared, trusted, worshipped. This was holiness as it irradiates the understanding. This knowledge of God in the creature is the perfection of knowledge. Science, until it reaches this point, does but fumble. It misses the very life of true knowledge; it is only a learned and pompous ignorance.

Adam had this knowledge of God,

But this habit of spiritual discernment was accompanied with righteousness or rectitude of disposition —that is, a state of soul in conformity with the requisitions of the Divine law—a propensity to universal obedience. The law was the bent of his being. As soon as the concrete occasions should present themselves, he had that within him which would at once reveal and incline to the right. The intuitive perception and the prompt disposition manifested his holiness, and induced all forms of actual righteousness which his circumstances and relations demanded.

and also this rectitude.

This, then, was the primitive condition of Adam. He was made in the image of God —as being an upright creature, with reason enlightened in the spiritual knowledge of God as that know-

The primitive condition of the first man.

ledge was mediated through the creatures, with a will prone to obey the dictates of reason thus enlightened and therefore in accordance with the spirit of the Divine law. He knew his relations to God, his relations to his wife, his relations to his children and his relations to the world; and knew them with that spiritual apprehension which converted his knowledge into one continued act of religion.

The Devil has a personal and spiritual nature, but not the image of God.

That true holiness is the strict and proper sense of the image of God, appears from the contrast betwixt the image of God and that of the Devil. If the possession of a personal, spiritual nature were the image of God, the Devil and his angels would bear it. But their image is, in the Scriptures, made directly contradictory to the image of God. Hence, that image must consist in those moral perfections which Satan has lost, and which man, since the fall, acquires only by a new creation.

In what sense the holiness of Adam was natural.

The holiness which man possessed at his creation was natural—not in the logical sense that it pertained to his essence as man, or was a property inseparable from it, but in the sense that it coexisted as a habit with that nature. Man was not first created and then holiness infused, but holiness was concreated with him. He was holy as soon as he began to be. Hence it is not scriptural, with the Papists, to make it a supernatural gift, something superadded to nature by grace. It was no more of grace than creation itself was of grace. It was the inheritance of his nature—the birth-right of his being. It was the state in which all his faculties received their form.

5. We have now considered the distinguishing characteristics of man, and the condition in which he was when he came from the hands of his Creator. We have seen that he was neither an infant nor a savage, but a man—in the full maturity of his powers, endowed with knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and prepared to enter at once upon the career assigned him as a moral and responsible creature. As long as he retained his integrity, he enjoyed the blessedness

which springs from the harmony of a soul proportioned and balanced in all its powers, and from the consciousness of the favour of God and the exercise of communion with Him.

Adam's holiness natural, but not indefectible.

But it remains to be added, in order to complete the picture of man's primitive estate, that his holiness, though natural, was not indefectible. He was liable to fall. That man, as a creature, was necessarily mutable, in the sense that he was capable of indefinite improvement—of passing from one degree of expansion to another—is easily understood; but that a holy being should be capable of a change from the good to the bad—that he should be able to reverse the uprightness of his make, to disorder his whole inward constitution, to derange its proportions and the regulative principles of its actions—is one of the most difficult propositions that we encounter in the sphere of theology. How could sin enter where all was right? If the understanding rejoiced in truth, the will in rectitude, and the affections in the truly beautiful and good, how could error, impurity and deformity find a lodgment within the soul? What was to suggest the thought of anything so monstrous and unnatural? It is clear that there must have been some defect in the moral state of man at his creation, in consequence of which he was liable to fall—some defect in consequence of which he might be deceived, taking falsehood for truth, and confounding the colours of good and evil.

What was the defect?

When we speak of a defect, we do not intend to convey the notion that anything was wanting to qualify man for his destiny; but that whatever the difference is betwixt a state of confirmed holiness and a state of untried holiness, that difference was the secret of the possibility of sin; and the absence of what is implied in confirmation is a defect. It was something which man had to supply by the exercise of his own will in a course of uniform obedience to God. It is certain that no creatures, either angels or men, have been created in immutable integrity. Sin has entered into both worlds, and it is equally clear that there is a great difference betwixt beings in whom

holiness has become, as it is with God, a necessity of nature, and beings who are yet capable of being blinded with error and seduced into transgression. But are we able to say precisely what this difference is? Are we able to point out how the understanding can be deceived and the will perverted in the case of any being that possesses a sound moral and intellectual constitution? This problem, which may be called the psychological possibility of sin, is confessedly one of great difficulty. The solutions which have been attempted are unsatisfactory; either as denying some of the essential facts of the case; or postulating principles which are contradictory to consciousness; or reducing the first sin to an insignificance utterly incompatible with the Divine providence in relation to it.

A problem to be solved.

Unsatisfactory solutions of it.

(1.) The Pelagian has no difficulty, because man at his creation had no character. His will was indifferent to good or evil; he could choose the one as readily as the other. Upon this scheme there is really no problem to be solved. But the scheme itself contradicts one of the essential facts in the case. It contradicts the fact that man was made in the image of God; that holiness was a constitutional endowment; that the same grace which made him a creature made him upright.

Pelagian,

(2.) The Papist—that is, one school of theology among the Papists—finds in the blindness of our impulses, which it calls *concupiscence*, a sufficient explanation of the difficulty. Our impulses in themselves possess no moral character; they have a natural tendency to excesses and irregularities; the mere existence of these irregular desires is not sin, and therefore not inconsistent with integrity of make. And yet they may prove stronger than reason; they may bewitch the understanding by sophistry, and cajole the will by false appearances of good, and thus seduce man into sin. Reason, indeed, is no security against them in a state of innocence without supernatural

and Papist.

grace. This theory labours under the fatal defect of denying that to be sin which the Scriptures affirm to be sin. Our impulses are not destitute of moral character when they become irregular or excessive. They are as much under law as any other part of our nature. The very terms *irregular* and *excessive* imply as much; and a constitution, therefore, is not sound which generates passions and appetites inconsistent with the supreme end of the individual. Paul makes concupiscence to be not only sin itself, but the fruitful mother of sin. Of course, if we give the mother, under whatever specious name, a residence in man's nature, we need not be surprised that she is soon surrounded with the children. To say that our impulses have no moral character is to contradict all human consciousness. Our desires, our appetites, our hopes, our fears, all have a determinate relation to the will, which brings them within the sphere of moral responsibility, and makes them the real exponent of a man's character. We measure our approbation of others more by these passive impressions than by the acts which are the immediate products of will.

Bishop Butler's theory.

(3.) A theory akin to this, but modifying its most offensive feature, is that of Bishop Butler, so ably and ingeniously and modestly presented in the Analogy of Religion. It proceeds from the same principle of the blindness of impulse; that is, that all our simple emotions are excited, independently of the will, by the presence, real or ideal, of their proper objects. There are qualities in things which cannot be contemplated without awakening these feelings. The eye affects the heart. The apprehension of danger has a natural tendency to generate dread; the prospect of good elicits hope; the sight of misery produces pity; and the contemplation of meanness and filth produces disgust. The emotion is awakened without the intervention of the will, without the deliberation of the understanding or the verdict of reason. The mere apprehension of the object does the work. Now, Butler does not postulate that in a sound state of the mind any impulses tending to

sin could exist; he does not lodge in us a concupiscence, in its natural promptings, contradictory to reason and to conscience, and here he avoids the Papal extravagance. In a sound state of the mind our passive impressions coincide with rectitude, but still they are not elicited by a consciousness of rectitude. No act of intelligent thought precedes them, and as thus excited, without any previous estimate of the value of their objects, they are blind; and here is a defect in our nature, which, though not sin itself, may open the door for sin. The security against this defect is the forming of a habit of never yielding to an impulse, or permitting it to influence the will without reflection. The danger of the impulse is that we may act without thought; the security is a habit, formed by a course of vigilance, of never acting without thought. But it may be asked, If the impulses coincide with rectitude, what danger is there for betraying us into sin? None, if man's determinations always centred only upon what is essentially right. If nothing were ever presented to his choice but what was intrinsically evil or intrinsically good, there is no danger of his passive impressions misleading him. But things indifferent, neither good nor evil in themselves, may be rendered subjects of positive command. They are suited in their own nature to excite our emotions. These emotions are not sinful in themselves, as their objects are not sinful in themselves. Under the influence of these emotions the will may be inclined to the unlawful indulgence, the understanding may be tempted to plead for it, and thus sin and error be introduced from the impulses of man coming in collision with positive commands in relation to things inherently indifferent. This is a brief outline of the psychological explanation of that great master of thought, in a work which will live as long as sound philosophy has votaries.

There are some circumstances in the biblical narrative of the temptation of our first parents that seem to coincide with this account. The prohibition which constituted the test of man's obedience did not relate to a *malum in se;* the eating

or abstaining from a given fruit was in itself indifferent, and only brought into the moral sphere by the accidental circumstance of a positive command. That fruit had the same tendency to provoke appetite as any other fruit in the garden, and accordingly Eve is represented as arrested by its promising appearance as food and its fitness to make one wise. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

But plausible as this hypothesis is, it is exposed to objections which are not easily resolved.

Two objections to it.

In the first place, it accounts only for the sin of Eve. It might be said that Adam was seduced by the passive impression of love to his wife, had not the apostle told us that the man was not deceived. It is remarkable that when the guilty pair were summoned before their Judge, the woman puts in the plea that she had been beguiled, she had been cheated and taken in, but the man ventures on no such allegation. He simply says: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat."

Again, this theory diminishes the malignity of the first sin. It becomes an act of inadvertence or inattention. It was an error incident to a suspension of vigilance, and springing from principles which constituted a part of human nature. To suppose that man was merely taken in, and did not mean to transgress the law of God, that he sinned ignorantly and by involuntary mistake, is to make a representation which every moral understanding will instantly pronounce to fall far short of the intense rebellion which the Scriptures uniformly ascribe to the first sin of the first man. It was a falling away from God; a deliberate renunciation of the claims of the Creator; a revolt from God to the creature, which involved a complete inversion of the moral destiny of man. We cannot avoid the feeling that if Butler's ex-

planation is the whole of the matter, our first parents were deserving of pity rather than severe reprobation—their offence was weakness and not deliberate guilt.

Orthodox solution.

The common explanation in all the orthodox creeds is, that the true ground of the solution is to be sought in the nature of the will. Man is represented as having fallen because he was left to the freedom of his own will. His transgression was voluntary, and as voluntary had to be deliberate. His sin was done on principle. It was not an accident, but a serious, solemn and deliberate rejection of the Most High as his God and portion. But this, it will be seen, is not a solution of the problem, but the statement in another form of the fact to be explained. The only approach which it makes to a genuine solution is in indicating the sphere in which the solution must be sought—the sphere of the will. There must be something in freedom before it has become necessity of nature out of which the possibility of sin can arise. We must, therefore, turn our attention to this point, and ascertain, if we can, what is the difference between freedom as necessity and freedom as the beginning of a moral career.

Freedom as necessity of nature.

Freedom as necessity of nature is the highest perfection of a creature. It is the end and aim of its moral culture. When a being has the principles of rectitude so thoroughly inwrought into the whole texture of the soul, when it is so thoroughly pervaded by their presence and power, as that they constitute the life of all thought and of all determination, holiness stands in the most inseparable relation to it in which it can be conceived to stand to a creature. This is to be pre-eminently like God, who is perfect truth and perfect righteousness. This entire subjection to the law of God, in which it becomes so completely identified with ourselves that we cannot think or act in contradiction to it, is the ideal of freedom which the Scriptures propose to us as our inheritance in Christ. This is eternal life. Now, at the

commencement of a moral career, our upright constitution has not been completely identified with our personality, because it has not, in its tendencies and dispositions, been taken up by our wills and deliberately chosen and adopted. It is the determination of the will which fixes our natural dispositions as *principles*. When they are reviewed by the understanding and deliberately chosen by the will, they then become ours in a nearer and closer sense; they are reflectively approved, reflectively endorsed, and through that energy by which acts generate a habit they become fixed elements of our life. If such an exercise of reflection and such an act of will must supervene in order to impregnate our personality with holiness and to convert native dispositions into settled principles, it is evident that there must be in the primitive condition of a moral being occasions in which it stands face to face with its own nature and destiny, and on which it must determine whether the bent of that nature shall be followed and its true normal development promoted, or whether it shall choose against nature another course and reverse its proper destiny. If the will has to decide the case, the issue must be made. Good and evil must stand in actual contrast, and there must be postulated under these circumstances a power—wilful, heady, perverse, yet a real power—to resist truth and duty. God gives man a constitution that points to Himself as the supreme good. He places before him the nature and consequences of evil as the contrast of the good. If man chooses the good, he fixes it in his very person; it becomes so grounded in the will that the will can never swerve from it. If he chooses the evil, he also grounds that in the will; it becomes a part of his very person; he becomes a slave, and can never more, by any power in himself, will the good or attain to it.

Freedom not yet deliberately chosen.

This I take to be the sense of the great body of the Reformed theologians, and of all the Reformed Confessions that have expressly embraced the subject. It is what Calvin means by

This the doctrine of Calvin, of our Confession and of Turrettin,

"an indifferent and mutable will," which he attributes to man in his state of infancy. It is what the Westminster Confession means when it affirms that man had originally "freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God, but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it." Turrettin[1] resolves the first sin into the "mutability and liberty of man." "The proximate and proper cause of sin, therefore," says he, "is to be sought only in the free-will of man, who suffered himself to be deceived by the devil, and at the instigation of Satan freely revolted from God." Howe has articulately discussed these views.

and fundamentally different from the Pelagian.

This account of the matter is fundamentally different from the Pelagian hypothesis of the natural indifference of the will to the distinctions of right and wrong. On the other hand, it recognizes the law of God as the normal principle of the will; it maintains, farther, that the spontaneous actions of man, all his impulses, desires and primitive volitions, were in conformity with that law. His spontaneity was all right. It was reflectively that the will renounced its law, changed its own tendencies, made out and out a new determination. The reflective man, when the ground or root of action was to be himself, perverted the spontaneous man whose ground of action was in God. The will did not first make a character, but change a character; did not first give man a moral disposition, but perverted the dispositions which God had given. By this theory we preserve the Scripture testimony concerning man's possession of the image of God, and harmonize the malignity which the sacred writers everywhere ascribe to the first sin of the first man. To unfold the psychological process which led to such a perversion of his nature is perhaps impossible; we are not sufficiently acquainted with the mystery of the will. All that we can say is, that it possessed this power of arbitrary self-determination, in defiance of reason, conscience and

[1] Locus ix., Quest. 7.

nature, as an essential element of its being. We have the traces of the same power in arbitrary resistance to our own reason and conscience in many events of our present fallen condition. We have lost all holiness, but there are often cases in the ordinary sphere of our activity where our determinations seem to be obstinately wilful and capricious. They seem made only to assert our own intense egoism.

But whatever explanation may be given of the possibility of sin, we know that it now exists, and that the seeds of it were not implanted in the nature of man as he came from the hands of God. It is no normal development of his faculties or life. He has introduced it, and therefore we are compelled to say that his primitive condition, though holy and happy, was mutable. He was not established in his integrity. His noble accomplishments were contingent.

The end of man's creation.

III. Having now considered the essential elements of humanity, and the condition in which the first man was created, it remains to inquire what was the immediate end of his creation, and what the relation in which, as a moral creature, he stood to God. His chief end was evidently to give glory to God. He was to learn more and more of God from the Divine works, and the administration of that great scheme of providence which was beginning to unfold itself before him. He was to render to the Almighty in his own name, and in the name of all the creatures over whom he had been constituted the head, the tribute of adoration and gratitude which the Divine goodness demanded. He was the high priest of nature; and every mute thing, every dumb beast, every lifeless plant, the majestic heavens, the verdant earth, the rolling sea, mountains, cataracts and plains—every province of being in which he saw the traces of the Divine hand—were to find their tongue in him and through him to pour into the ears of the Most High their ceaseless song of praise. They spoke to him, and he was to repeat their language to the Great Supreme. He stood as the head of an immense family of worshippers. Creation was a vast temple. Every

living and lifeless thing brought its offerings to the altar, and man was to present the grateful oblation to the Maker and Preserver of them all. It was a noble, a sublime position. To know was to love, and to love was to enjoy.

Man's relation to God was that of a servant.

The relation in which he stood to God may be more accurately defined as that of a servant, and the law of his life as obedience. Obedience, as expressive of perfect conformity with the will of God, comprehends the whole scope of his existence. This obedience involved the preservation of the image of God; the culture of his moral faculties by reflection, contemplation and the reflective adoption, as principles of his will, of his natural holiness; and a prompt performance of whatever duties pertained to his circumstances or were especially enjoined by God. The will of a servant must coincide with the will of his master; in this his faithfulness consists. Man's will was to make the will of God its supreme and only law. But it pertains to the condition of a servant that his continuance in favour depends on the continuance of his obedience, and that his expectations from his master are measured by his faithfulness. This, then, was man's estate. He was a creature; a servant under the moral law as the rule and guide of his obedience; bound to glorify God in perfect conformity with its requisitions, and authorized to expect the continuance of his present happiness in the sense of God's approbation as long as he persevered in the way of faithfulness. He had no evil to apprehend, either to his body or his mind, from within or from without. As long as he was faithful to his Master, he had a right to expect that his Master would protect him and bless him. There could be no death while there was no sin. But the servant must obey from himself. As a servant, man could never look to any interposition of God that should destroy the contingency of his holiness. His probation, in that aspect, must be commensurate with his immortality. There could never come a period in which he could have any claim upon God to render his integrity indefectible, or

to draw him into any closer relations with himself. Whatever arrangements might be made with a reference to these ends must spring from the pure benevolence of the Creator; they must be the offspring of grace and not of debt. Man must always stand or fall by his own obedience in the exercise of his own free-will. Through the law of habit a constant course of obedience would constantly diminish the dangers of transgression, but the possibility would always remain; and whatever security man might compass through the energy of will in fixing the type of character, he must always stand in that relation to God which measures his expectations by his service.

That the destiny of man, considered simply as a creature, was obedience in the relation of a servant is evident from the very nature of moral government as revealed in the structure of our own consciences.

FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

[This is one of the most difficult questions in the whole compass of Metaphysical Philosophy or Christian Theology. Its inherent difficulties have been aggravated by the ambiguities of language. All the terms which are introduced into the discussion have been so abusively employed that it is hard to fix clearly and precisely the points at issue, or to determine the exact ground which we or others actually maintain. We impose upon ourselves, as well as upon others, by the looseness of our terminology. *Liberty, necessity, contingency, possibility,* are all used in various senses, are applied in different relations, and without the utmost caution we are likely to embarrass ourselves by a latent confusion of these different significations.

Necessity is used metaphysically to express that the opposite of which involves a contradiction; naturally, to express the connection betwixt an effect and a cause, an antecedent and a consequent; and morally, in the twofold sense of obligation or duty, and the connection betwixt motive and volition. *Liberty* is used in relation to the absence of hindrance and restraint in the execution of our plans and purposes, and refers exclusively to the power of acting; or, to denote mere spontaneity—the mere activities and energies of our inner being according to their essential constitution; or, to the exclusion of a cause apart from itself in determining the decisions of the will. *Contingency* is used in the sense of the undesigned or accidental; and, in the sense that another reality was at the same time producible by the same cause. The *possible*, again, is the metaphysical non-existence of contradiction, or the contingent in the sense last explained.

These instances of ambiguity of language are sufficient to illustrate the nature of the difficulties upon this point.

The will is indispensable to moral agency. A being without a will cannot be the subject of rewards and punishments. Where there is no will there is no responsibility. In investigating, therefore, the freedom of the will, the conditions which a just exposition must fulfil are these:

1. Freedom as a confirmed state of holiness—an inward necessity of holiness, in which the perfection of every moral being consists, must be grounded and explained. Any account of the will which leaves the permanent states of heart of holy beings without moral significance; which deprives character and rooted habits of moral value; which attaches importance only to individual acts, and acts considered apart from their expression of inward and controlling principles, is radically defective.

2. Any account of the will which does not ground our sense of guilt, our convictions of ill-desert, and which does not show that these convictions are no lie, but the truth, is also defective. I must show that my sin is mine—that it finds its root and principle in me.

3. Hence, a just account of the will must show that God is not the author of sin. To say that He is its author is to destroy its character—it ceases to be sin altogether.

4. A just account of the will must also solve the problem of the inability, and yet of the responsibility, of the sinner—that he cannot, and yet he ought, and justly dies for not doing what he confessedly cannot do.

The fulfilling of these conditions is indispensable to a broad-sided, adequate exposition of the will. To leave out any of them is to take partial and one-sided views.

1. Tried by this standard, the theory of Arminians and Pelagians is seen to be essentially defective. Two forms of the theory—indifference and equilibrium. Müller, ii., 17, 21.

(1.) These theories contradict an established holiness, and deny any moral character to the decisions of the will—they are mere caprice.

(2.) They do not account for character at all—they put morality in single acts.

(3.) They deny the sinner's helplessness and even sinfulness—the sinner is as free as the saint, the devil as the angel.

2. The theory of Edwards breaks down.

(1.) It does not explain guilt; it does not rid God of being the author of sin.

(2.) It does not explain the moral value attached to character.

(3.) This theory explains self-expression, but not self-determination. Now, a just view must show how we first *determine* and then habitually *express* ourselves. In these determinations is found the moral significance of these expressions. Otherwise my nature would be no more than the nature of a plant. Will supposes conscience and intelligence—these minister to it; the moral law—this is its standard.

3. There are two states in which man is found—a servant and a son.

The peculiarity of the servant is that his holiness is not confirmed. It exists rather as impulse than habit, and the law speaks rather with authority—sense of duty. Now, the province of the will was to *determine*—that is, to root and ground these principles as a fixed nature. There was power to do so. When so determined, a holy necessity would have risen as the perfection of our being.

There was also the possibility of determining otherwise—a power of perverting our nature, of determining it in another direction. The power, therefore, of determining itself in one or the other direction is the freedom of a servant preparing to become a son, and the whole of moral culture lies in the transition.

This theory explains all the phenomena, and has the additional advantage of setting in a clear light the grace of regeneration.

In the moral sphere, and especially in relation to single acts, this freedom is now seen in man. It is neither necessity nor a contempt of the principle of law.]

LECTURE XI.

MORAL GOVERNMENT.

IN order to appreciate aright the dispensation under which man was placed, soon after his creation, in the garden of Eden, it is necessary to have a clear conception—

I. Of the essential principles of moral government;

II. Of what is implied in the relation of a servant.

I. Moral government is a government in which the moral law is the rule of obedience. This is obvious from the epithet by which it is distinguished. But the moral law is the rule of obedience under every dispensation of religion. It expresses those eternal distinctions of right and wrong upon which all spiritual excellence depends; and which God cannot disregard without renouncing the perfections of His own nature. Every believer under the Gospel aims at conformity with that law, and feels that his character is defective and his salvation incomplete until it has pervaded his whole soul, and moulded every power and faculty in harmony with its spirit.

The first essential of a moral government.

The characteristic principle of a moral government, therefore, is the principle upon which rewards and punishments are distributed. That principle is distributive justice. When men are rewarded and punished in precise proportion to their merits and demerits, then the government is strictly and properly moral.

The second essential.

The notions of justice, and of merit and demerit, are primitive cognitions of our moral nature, or of that practical understanding by which we discriminate betwixt a duty and a crime.

The root of this notion indicated.

Conscience, in one single, indivisible operation, gives us cognitions which can be logically separated and distinguished.

Three cognitions given by conscience;

There is first the perception of right, which can be represented in terms of intelligence and defined as an act of the understanding. There is next the sense of duty, the feeling of obligation, which seems to partake of the nature of the emotions and to be properly defined by terms of sensibility. Then there is the conviction of merit or demerit, according as the rule has been observed or neglected, which seems to be the practical conclusion of a judge in applying the law to a concrete instance. It is the sentence which the mind passes upon itself according to the nature of its works; and yet in its simplest manifestation in consciousness it is a feeling—a sense that such and such acts or dispositions deserve well, such other acts and dispositions deserve ill. It is that phenomenon of conscience which connects happiness with right and misery with wrong. It is the root of the whole conception of justice. Without this primitive conviction there could be no notion of punishment and no notion of reward. Pain and pleasure receive their moral significance exclusively from that sentiment of good and ill desert which connects them with conduct as judicial consequences.

logically distinguishable, yet fundamentally the same.

Though conscience is thus resolvable into three logical cognitions which are easily distinguished in terms, they are all fundamentally one and the same. The perception of right, the sense of duty, and the conviction of good and ill desert are precisely the same cognition reflectively surveyed from different points; or, rather, they are different forms of expressing one and the same original deliverance of conscience. There is not first an intellectual act, which, in the way of speculation, pronounces a thing to be right; then an emotional sanction, which, in the way of feeling, instigates to obedience; and then a judicial sentence consequent upon the course actually pursued. There are not three separate and successive states of mind, which reciprocally condition and

depend upon each other. There is but a single act of consciousness, and in that single act these logical discriminations are held in perfect unity. To say that a thing is right is to say that it involves obligation and merit; to say that it is a matter of obligation is to say that it is right. Obligation has no meaning apart from rectitude, and rectitude has no meaning apart from obligation and merit. The perception of right is not a speculative apprehension; it is not the affirmation that something is. It is the apprehension which, in its very nature, implies the peculiar feeling which we call a sense of duty—it is the apprehension that something ought to be. The cognition of the right and the feeling of duty are the same; the feeling of duty is the very form, the very essence of the cognition. Hence, rectitude is an intuition of our moral understanding, which can be explained by nothing simpler than itself. You might as well undertake to define *red* or *blue* to a man born blind, or *loud* or *low* to a man born deaf, as to represent *right* to a man whose conscience had never given him the sense of duty or the conviction of merit. It is a primitive notion, capable of being resolved into nothing else. The events of experience furnish the occasions upon which the notion is developed; it manifests itself through the sense of duty, and through the praises or censures which we bestow upon our own conduct or upon the actions of others. When reflection analyzes the grounds of these judgments and elicits the principles which, in every instance, determine and regulate them, we then compass the fundamental principles of morals in the form of abstract propositions. We then have the rules which we can subsequently apply reflectively and by design.

The sense of good and ill desert a primitive notion.

From this analysis it is clear that merit and right are inseparably united—that demerit and wrong are as indissolubly connected. The man who does right ought to be rewarded, the man who does wrong ought to be punished; this is the form in which the radical notion of justice

Merit and right, demerit and wrong, bound indissolubly by a moral tie.

first expresses itself in the human soul. Its language is, that happiness is due to virtue as a matter of right, and misery is due to sin as a matter of right. This connection by a moral tie defines the notions of reward and punishment. Now, a government which distributes pleasure and pain exclusively in the way of rewards and punishments, and in precise proportion to the good or ill desert of the agents, is a moral government. That was the government under which man from the moment of his creation necessarily came as a moral creature. In the image of God he had the law written upon his heart which constituted the rule and measure of his obedience; and in the sense of duty he had the supreme authority of that law grounded as a first principle in the very structure of his conscience; and in the conviction of good and ill desert he had engraved upon his soul that imperishable notion of justice which, if not sufficient to protect from the foul wrong of apostasy, would for ever justify God to his own conscience for the penal retributions which doomed him to misery and death. God interwove into the very elements of his being the essential articles of the dispensation under which he was placed as a creature. He found himself, as soon as he began to be a subject to law, a servant to his master. This relation was stamped upon his conscience.

This moral principle constitutes a government moral.

When we proceed more narrowly to examine the import of the conviction of good and ill desert, we find that it resolves itself into the expectation of favour from the Supreme Ruler, or the apprehension of His displeasure. It expresses itself in the language of hope or fear. There is a still more remarkable phenomenon; the sense of guilt or the sense of demerit is found to obliterate all the claims of past righteousness. One sin brings the soul into darkness and terror. If man had obeyed for years and then in an evil hour had been tempted into an act of disloyalty, that one act would have

Conscience both hopes and fears,

but condemns the righteous for one sin.

changed his whole relations to the lawgiver and have effaced the entire merits of his past life. There is no compromise in merit. Obedience must be complete or it loses all its value; the very moment it fails all is over. There is no such thing in a strictly moral government as a balancing of the good and bad, as weighing them in scales together, and dealing with the agent according to the preponderance. Obedience is merit, disobedience is demerit, and obedience ceases whenever disobedience begins. Perfect moral government keeps a creature under probation until it has sinned. Then its relations are changed. It becomes bound to misery by the eternal law of justice, and can never be received into favour until the claims of that law are cancelled. The reason is very obvious why a single transgression cancels a whole career of virtue. The law can exact nothing but perfect obedience, and as the creature is one, its whole life is one, and a departure in any period of its life mars the perfection of its obedience, and makes it morally null. A line may be straight for a great distance, and yet if it has a single crook in it at any part of its course, it ceases to be a straight line. Perfect obedience is that alone which is obedience at all, and the very moment the perfection is lost everything entitled to reward is lost. All merit vanishes for ever. The reward which moral government postulates is the continuance of the Divine favour through the period of obedience—nothing more, nothing less. There must be no unhappiness, there must be no want, no pain while there is no transgression. The very language of the law as written upon the heart is, Do and live, for while you do you shall live. The infliction of pain upon a perfectly holy being seems to contradict the deepest instincts of our moral nature, for such a being is necessarily contemplated as the fit subject of rewards, and as having a claim for exemption from all that is evil. I have no hesitation in saying that it would be unjust that the righteous should die, and equally unjust that the

Imperfect obedience null.

The creature's whole immortality, one life.

wicked should live. It is no more consistent with God's character to exclude the upright from His favour than to receive the wicked into favour. He might just as easily bless the sinner as curse the saint. The law of distributive justice equally forbids both.

Representation not a necessary principle of pure moral government.

There is another feature of pure moral government that deserves to be particularly noticed, and that is, that it may deal with men exclusively as individuals, and not collectively as a species. Each man may be required to stand or fall for himself alone. There is no principle of justice which necessitates the complication of others in our guilt or obedience. On the other hand, there is no principle of justice which precludes it. In our social constitution, and the unity of race which includes in one blood all the descendants of Adam, a foundation is laid for these arrangements of goodness which shall modify our individual independence and render possible the participation of others in our own personal merit or demerit. But this is not absolutely necessary. The principle of representation might have been ignored, and no one could complain that any injustice had been done him. This principle, therefore, cannot be regarded as an essential element of moral government in itself considered. If Adam, in the light merely of a moral subject, had retained his integrity and had begotten children, their perpetuity in holiness might have been wholly independent of his. They would have run their own moral career; their relations to their father and the rest of the species would only have been the occasions of complicated and interesting duties, in the discharge of which each was to give account solely for himself. Under these circumstances, none would have been benefited but by their own obedience, none injured except by their own transgression; that is, none would have been directly rewarded or directly punished. Indirect aids in maintaining their uprightness all would have received from the good, and injury in the way of temptations to disobedience all would have received from the bad.

Recapitulation.

We have now briefly enumerated the essential elements of a proper moral government. It is one in which the moral law is the rule of obedience, in which distributive justice is the principle of the dispensations of rewards and punishments. We have traced this principle to its root in human nature, have found it in the primitive sense of good and ill desert, have seen that it secures favour to the righteous only during the term of his obedience, and that the very moment he transgresses it binds him over to the penal visitations of guilt; that it pronounces nothing to be obedience which is not perfect, and that as the life of the man is one, it must cover the whole of his immortality or fail entirely and for ever. Hence he can never under mere moral government be exempt from the possibility of falling. He can never be rendered absolutely and immutably safe.

Under a purely moral government the creature never safe from falling.

II. Having thus defined the nature of a pure moral government, let us next consider a little more distinctly what is involved in the relation of a servant.

It is contrasted in the Scriptures with the relation of a son, and when we have obtained a clear conception of the distinguishing peculiarities of adoption into the family of God, we shall perceive in what respects the condition of a servant is humbler and less glorious. Now, in the case of the son, the ground of his expectation from God is not his own merit, but the measureless fullness of the Divine benevolence. God deals with him not upon the principle of simple justice, but according to the riches of the glory of His grace. The question is, not what he deserves, but what God's goodness shall prompt Him to communicate.

First difference betwixt a servant and a son.

From this peculiarity arises another: the access to God is less full and free in the case of a servant than in that of a son. There is not the same richness of communion. There is not the same nearness, the same unreserved confidence. How this distance

Second difference.

realized itself in the instance of an obedient subject, how God manifested His favour, and what was the real extent of man's privilege in his primitive condition in relation to his appearance before God—the precise peculiarities of his subjective state—we are unable to represent. But we know that there is this marked difference betwixt a servant and a son. The condition of the saints under the Law is compared to that of servants, and the reason assigned is that the way of access to God was not so fully and distinctly revealed as under the Gospel.

A further difference.

There is a further difference between the two states in relation to the Law. To a servant it addresses itself more distinctly in the way of command. Its requisitions are recognized as *duties;* to the son it is rather a life than a law, and its injunctions are privileges rather than obligations. Whatever may have been the spontaneous pleasure of the first man in obedience to the Law, his exercises were acts of conscious obedience and performed in the spirit of duty. Love gave him alacrity in all his acts; but it was a love which consecrated duty, and which only sweetened, without absorbing, the authority of law. The same difference, as exhibited between the saints of the old and new dispensations, is characterized respectively as the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption. There was, of course, nothing like slavish fear in the bosom of unfallen Adam, and there was no irksome attention to his duties as a grievous and revolting burden, but there was the operation of conscience which adapted him to moral government, and which kept constantly before his mind the ideas of merit and demerit, the eternal rule of justice as the measure of his hopes, and the hypothetical uncertainty which hung upon his destiny. He could not have had that rich and glorious freedom which belongs to the sons of God.

These views of moral government and the relation of servant, scriptural.

That the account which has been given of the essential principles of moral government and of the general relation of a servant is not a fanciful representation, but a just statement of the

attitude in which God and Adam stood to each other at the commencement of man's existence, is easily collected from the whole tenor and from many explicit passages of Scripture. In the teachings of the Old and New Testaments in relation to the economy of grace in the different stages of its development, there is a constant allusion to those great facts of moral government which underlie the whole scheme. Whatever is presupposed as essential to Christianity in the relations of man to God under the Law, belongs to this subject; and these presuppositions determine the Scripture doctrine of what moral government actually is and must be. Founded in immutable justice, its laws and sanctions can never be set aside. Now, in explaining man's condition as a sinner, and the truths which must be presupposed in any scheme of justification, the essential relations of man as a subject of law are clearly brought out. In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul begins by a distinct enunciation of the rule of distributive justice which we have seen is its regulative principle: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God."[1] This passage is very conclusive—it endorses almost everything that we have endeavoured to set forth. First, the judgment of God is determined by the actual merit or demerit of men. They will be tried by their works. Those who have obeyed the law shall be entitled to the rewards of their virtue, and those who have transgressed must expect to receive the consequences of their guilt. In the next place, the judgment is personal and individual—it is to every man. There is a distinction made by grace betwixt the Jew and the Gentile—no such distinction is known to the law. Moral govern-

[1] Rom. ii. 6–11.

ment knows only the obedient and the disobedient. It is a grave error to imagine that in this passage Paul's design was to set forth the possibility to man, in his present circumstances, of justification by the Law. He means to imply no such thing. On the contrary, his purpose was to evince, from the principle here laid down, the futility of all such hopes. To do this he signalizes the conditions of a legal justification—perfect obedience, the ground on which the reward is dispensed, and distributive justice; and from these conditions proves the utter hopelessness of standing before God in our own righteousness. It is by means of this principle that he shuts up all under sin, and leaves no way of escape but in the free mercy of God through Jesus Christ. He points out to them what they must do if they would secure favour by their works, and as the requirements are beyond their strength, it is evidently vain to place any reliance upon the Law.

In Ezekiel[1] we have certain abstract propositions laid down, which, whatever may have been their immediate scope and significancy, as abstract propositions sustain all that we have said: "Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth." Here the intrinsic merit of obedience and the intrinsic demerit of disobedience are broadly asserted. It is affirmed that the value of righteousness ceases with the first act of sin. In the day that the righteous man sins he forfeits the right to life. But there seems also to be maintained that the demerit of sin can be cancelled by subsequent obedience, and that the sinner by penitence may put himself again in the position of a righteous man. If this were the meaning, the second proposition would be contradictory to the first. The abstract proposition is, that a man

[1] Ch. xxxiii. 12, seq.

can never perish considered as righteous, and that upon the supposition of a sinner becoming really and truly righteous, he would not be a fit subject for punishment. Such a change, however, is impossible except under a system of grace, which expiates guilt and renews and sanctifies the heart, and imputes to our obedience the merit which purchased the grace wherein we stand. The general notion of the whole passage is, that righteousness—true and real righteousness—is, in itself, acceptable to God; but that true righteousness is inconsistent with the least sin. The soul that sinneth must surely die. Hence, the prophet is far from saying that a sinner can repent by virtue of any provisions of the Law. He only says what would be his condition and his prospects, provided he could be found again in a state of righteousness; and the very necessity of repentance is a testimony that God cannot communicate the sense of His love while the love of evil continues to reign in the heart.

Moral government must be carefully distinguished from moral discipline. The only discipline which the Law recognizes is the discipline of growth. The servant may increase in knowledge and ability, and with every step of his progress the circle of his duties increases. But a process of education, by which habits of holiness are formed and propensities to evil eradicated, belongs to an economy under which sin can be pardoned, and imperfect and sincere efforts to obey accepted as perfect obedience to the Law. Without provisions for expiation of guilt and the communication of God's grace, a state of moral discipline to a sinner is a palpable absurdity. The Law punishes, but never seeks to reform the criminal. It puts him to death, but never seeks to restore him to life. And punishment, apart from grace, has no natural tendency to ameliorate—it only hardens the heart. Conscience makes us desperate, but never penitent. The Law knows nothing, therefore, of repentance. Once a sinner, according to it, always and hopelessly a sinner. The line that has one crook can never be

Moral government, how distinguished from moral discipline.

What the Law knows, and what it does not know.

made straight. The obedience that fails once fails in all. The relation, too, of holiness to the favour of God shows that no provision can be implied in the nature of the Law for restoration to good.

Moral Discipline and Moral Government are distinguished: 1. As to their principle; the principle of discipline is love—that of moral government is justice. 2. As to their end; the end of moral discipline is the improvement of the subject—the end of moral government is to maintain the authority of law. 3. In their penalties; sins in moral discipline are faults to be corrected—in moral government they are crimes to be punished. One is the administration of a father over his children—the other a dispensation of the magistrate to subjects. 4. Righteousness in the one is a qualification—in the other a right. The distinctions are so broad and palpable that nothing but confusion can result from treating them as essentially the same. Indeed, many of the most ingenious hypotheses invented to explain the evil of the universe have plunged their authors into irretrievable perplexities by the capital mistake of confounding what so obviously belong to different spheres. Moral discipline pertains to the kingdom of grace—moral government is the essence of the kingdom of nature.

Discipline is of grace: government is of nature.

[In recasting this lecture, attend to the following suggestions:

I. Moral government distinguished—1. By its rule. 2. By its principle, distributive justice. 3. Perpetual innocence, its requirement. 4. Repentance impossible. 5. Individual in its claims.

II. The relation of a servant. Bring out the idea that the law is looked on more as an expression of *will*—its authority prominent. In the case of a son, the prominent notion is that of imitation—imitators of God as dear children.]

LECTURE XII.

THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

HAVING considered the essential principles of moral government, and what is involved in the relation of a servant, we are prepared to understand and appreciate the peculiar features of the dispensation under which man was placed immediately after his creation. Though God in justice might have left man to the operation of a pure moral government, conducted by the rule of distributive justice, and might have for ever retained him in the attitude of a servant, yet the Divine goodness seems to have contemplated from the very beginning a nearer and tenderer relationship, and a destiny of inconceivably greater dignity and glory than mere justice would or could have awarded. It was always God's purpose to turn the servant into a son. What sonship implies it is impossible for us adequately to conceive. The Apostle John declares in reference to the sonship of the saints, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." The ground of a son's right to the blessings he enjoys is the love of the father, and the principle on which he possesses it is that of inheritance and not of debt. To be a subject in whom God may express the infinite goodness of His own nature, to be an heir of Him who is fullness of joy and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore, is certainly to be exalted to the highest excellence of which a creature can be possessed. Then, a son has unlimited access to his father's presence. His communion

The servant to become a son.

with him is full and rich and free. The conception of such a purpose, so far transcending all the demands of justice, is a conspicuous display of the grace and goodness which have characterized all the dispensations of God in relation to our race. It was a great thing to be a man, endowed with capacities of truth and knowledge and duty; a great thing to have been made susceptible of all the refined and tender sensibilities which belong to our race—sensibilities which convert the contemplation of the scenes of nature into a feast, which drink beauty and joy and rapture from the grand and sublime spectacles which greet us in the starry canopy above us, the swelling mountains around us or the majestic sea before us—sensibilities which convert the ties of domestic life into charms, and make society in all its complicated relations the minister of good; it was a great thing to have been created in the image of God, with a heart to love and adore His great name and exemplify the holiness of His character, to have been made immortal and capable of an everlasting sense of the Divine favour—to have been thus made a man, a holy man, an immortal man, with the prospect of endless good, surely this was grace; it was grace upon grace! Plato said that there were three things for which he blessed God: 1. That he had been made a man, and not a beast; 2, that he had been born a Greek, and not a barbarian; and 3, that he had been permitted to live in the age of Socrates. With how much more fervour should the first man have celebrated the Divine goodness as he walked forth upon the new creation in all its loveliness and beauty, and was regaled on every hand with the tokens of the Divine regard! How must his heart have overflowed as he sounded the mysterious depths of his own being, and felt the grand and glorious capacities with which he was endowed! His first utterance must have been praise, his first impulse to throw himself upon the ground and bless that God who made him what he was. It was amazing goodness to have furnished him with all the blessings that crowned his lot, considered merely as a servant. But what

shall we say of the goodness that could not stop here—that as it recognized in man the capacity of closer ties with itself, yearned to take him to its bosom and pour upon him a richer tide of glory and of joy than the cold relations of law and justice could demand? Surely, our God is love; creation shows it as well as the cross! Surely, our God is grace; the first covenant proves it as truly as the second!

Grace in the first covenant.

In order that the change from the condition of a servant to that of a son might take place, it was necessary that the man should prove himself faithful in the first relation. Adoption was to be a reward of grace, but still it was to be a reward. It was not a favour to be conferred in defiance of the relations that naturally subsisted betwixt God and His creature. Man was not to be arbitrarily promoted. His dignity was to come as the fruit of his obedience. It was much more than he deserved, much more than he could deserve. But in the plenitude of His own bounty, God proposed to add this boon of adoption over and above all that man was entitled to receive for his service if he should prove faithful to his trust. The purpose, therefore, to adopt the servant into the family and make him an heir, introduces an important modification of the general principles of moral government in the limitation of the period of probation, and this limitation introduces a new feature in the Divine economy, even that of justification. Under the original relations of man to God, his probation was coextensive with his immortality, and perpetual innocence was his only righteousness, and was only a security of perpetual favour. No past obedience could exempt from the possibility of a future fall. Man's condition was necessarily precarious. To limit probation is to make a temporary obedience cover the whole compass of immortality, to make it equivalent to what perpetual innocence would have been, and thus, from the nature of the case, render apostasy after the limitation had expired

Adoption of grace, and yet a reward.

Probation limited as to time, and thus justification introduced.

impossible. The very essence of justification is to produce as its effect indefectibility of holiness. If God chooses to gather our whole being into a short probation, and to make the obedience of that period equivalent to an immortality spent as faithful servants, the supposition that after the period was passed we could sin involves the monstrous idea that there can be a perpetual right to God's favour on the part of those who are destitute of His love—that men can be at one and the same time the objects of the Divine complacency and disgust. The essential notion of justification is, that obedience for a limited time shall place the subject beyond the possibility of guilt. If he is faithful during the stipulated period, he is safe for ever, he is confirmed immutably in life. That this must be the case results from another consideration. If God treats limited as perpetual obedience, he must make limited secure perpetual obedience. Otherwise His judgment will not be according to truth. Adoption is grounded in justification. The state of a son in which man is placed in such relations to God as to secure him from the possibility of defection is founded upon that limitation of obedience which gathers up the whole immortality in its probationary character into a brief compass, and then makes its real complexion depend upon the fidelity or infidelity displayed in the trial. Adoption, in other words, depends upon justification, and justification is unintelligible without the contraction of the period of trial. The very moment trial ceases the attitude of a servant ceases, a new relation must necessarily supervene; and God has constituted that new relation according to the riches of His grace.

These modifications of moral government are the offspring of the Divine will. They do not flow from any necessary principles of His nature or His government. They are the free acts of His bounty. Hence, the dispensation of religion which they superinduce must be a matter of pure revelation. Adam could not have dreamed of it without special communication with God. He never was, unless for a very

Free acts of God's bounty, and matters of pure revelation.

short time, under a mere system of natural religion. He was placed at the beginning of his career under an economy which looked far beyond the provisions of mere nature, and at the very outset of his career was made the subject of special Divine revelations.

Man's religion must always be a revealed one.

This is a very important and a very striking thought. Man's religion has always been conditioned by revelation. That is not a peculiarity of the Christian system. It marks all God's dealings with the race. The reason is obvious: His goodness has always been greater than our deserts. Our moral nature is adjusted to a scheme of pure justice, and whenever God's love prompts Him to outrun its demands, our expectations must be determined by special revelation of His purposes and plans. His free acts cannot be anticipated by any measure of reason or conscience. If known at all, they have to be made known by Himself. To deny, therefore, that our religion must be revealed, is to say that God can never do more than our merits can exact; it is to limit and contract His goodness. Let His love be infinite, and it is morally certain that He will entertain purposes which we could not conjecture, and which He must impart to us. The same love that transcends justice in the purpose will transcend nature in the knowledge. What prompts Him to do more than nature calls for, will prompt Him to teach more than nature can discover. Hence, the religion of Adam was really a revealed religion; it was conditioned by a dispensation introducing important modifications into the general principles of moral government, the nature of which, as purposes of the Divine mind, could not be ascertained apart from His making of them known.

The Covenant of Works defined.

This dispensation is known as the Covenant of Works. This covenant is a scheme for the justification and adoption of man, and is called a *covenant* because the promise was suspended upon a condition with which man was freely to comply. It was not a covenant in the sense that man was at liberty to

decline its terms. He was under obligation to accept as a servant whatever God might choose to propose. He had no stipulations to make; he was simply to receive what God enjoined. It is also implied in the use of the word *covenant* that the faith of God was pledged in case the condition were fulfilled. Nothing sets in a stronger light the kindness and condescension which have signalized all the dealings of the Most High with our race than that the very first dispensation of religion under which man, still a servant, was placed —than that the very words by which it is described should seem to savour of a treaty in which parties met and stipulated. And some have pushed the words so far as really to represent man as treating upon something of a footing of equality with God. All such inferences should be carefully avoided.

The two essential things.

The covenant was essentially a conditioned promise, which man, in the exercise of his own free-will, might secure or forfeit. The essential things, therefore, in it are the condition and the promise.

Limitation of probation as to the persons.

Before proceeding, however, to consider these, it is well to notice another modification of moral government besides the limitation of the period of probation introduced into this economy; and that is, the limitation as to the persons put on trial. We have seen that simple justice deals with men as individuals. Each man stands or falls according to his own integrity. But in the covenant of works one stood for all. Adam represented all that were to be descended from him by ordinary generation. They were tried in him. Had he stood, they would have been justified through his righteousness, and adopted into God's family as sons. As he sinned, they sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression, and thus became outcasts and aliens. The provision by which Adam was made a public person, and not treated as a private individual, is as much a provision of pure goodness as any other provision of the whole scheme. If he had maintained

A provision of pure goodness.

his integrity, and we had inherited life and glory through his obedience, none would ever have dreamed that there was aught of hardship or cruelty in the scheme by which our happiness had been to us so cheaply secured. The difference of result makes no difference in the nature of the principle. But those who object do not bear in mind that the law which made Adam our head and representative is the law by virtue of which alone, so far as we know, the happiness of any man can be secured. Without the principle of representation it is possible that the whole race might have perished and perished for ever. Each man, as the species successively came into existence, would have been placed under the law of distributive justice. His safety, therefore, would have been for ever contingent. It is possible that if the first man, with all his advantages, abused his liberty and fell, each of his descendants might imitate his example and fall also. It is possible, therefore, that the whole race might have been involved in guilt and ruin. Some might have stood longer than others, but what is any measure of time to immortality? Who shall say that, in the boundless progress of their immortal being, one by one, all may not have sinned? It is certainly possible and probable that this would have been the case. It is certain that multitudes would have abused their freedom and perished. But to sin under such circumstances is to sin hopelessly. There can be no redeemer if each man is to be treated exclusively as an individual. If we cannot sin in another, we cannot be redeemed by another. If the principle of representation is to be excluded from God's government, salvation to the guilty must also be excluded. Under this principle multitudes are in fact saved, when without it all might have been lost. Hence, it is clearly a provision of grace—it was introduced for our good; for our safety, our happiness, and not as a snare or a curse. God seems to have had an eye to it when He constituted our species a race connected by unity of blood, and not a collection of individuals belonging to the same class, simply be-

No salvation without representation.

cause they possess the same logical properties. He made Adam the root, because He designed to make him the head; the father, because He designed to make him the representative of all mankind. The generic constitution evidently looks to the federal relation. We are one by birth, because we were destined to be one by covenant. In all the instances in which God has appointed that one should federally represent others, there has been some natural tie—especially the tie of blood—between the head and the members. There is no case in which the appointment has been arbitrary. It is always the parent who stands for his children; the king who stands for his subjects. There is, therefore, a significancy in this peculiarity of our species. The angels have no blood connection, and, so far as we know, the principle of representation has no place in the Divine economy with reference to them. We are not competent to say that a logical unity of species, even where there is no tie of race, may not be an adequate foundation for federal headship; we cannot say that the government of God over angels must necessarily have contemplated them exclusively as individuals, because they are not descended one from another, and have not the unity of a common stock. We do not know sufficiently the essential grounds and conditions of the representative relation to pronounce dogmatically that it can never be instituted, where the same circumstances do not obtain which are found in the case of man. It may be that a common blood is indispensable—that there is something in this natural unity which so identifies the moral interests of the race as to render it extremely proper that the branches should be determined by the root, the destiny of the children by the fortunes of the father. This may be so, but we have no positive data for saying that it must be so. All we know is, that natural descent determines representation in reference to man—that our being one blood is the ground of our being treated as one man, in the person of our first father. He represented all who descend from him by the ordinary law of the propa-

Adam made the root, so as to be the head.

gation of the species. He was the whole of his posterity included in his loins, who would have been introduced into the world in the ordinary way had not sin entered. An extraordinary descendant, introduced into the world apart from that law, and forming no part of the race according to its original destination, would not be represented. He was not in the root; he was not properly in the loins of Adam; he was not one who would have been born if the species had followed its normal development. Hence, representation is confined to the descendants who spring from Adam according to the established law of propagation; and these sustain to him the double relation of children to a parent, and of members to a covenant head. He stood for them in the first dispensation of religion. They were tried in his person. The whole species was considered as contained in him. He was not only a man, but Man, and the state in which they find themselves must be traced directly to his disastrous agency. The natural tie is the ground of the federal tie; we were represented by our father because we were really and truly in the loins of our father. This modification of the principles of moral government, by which all were included in one and probation limited to a single individual, is no less remarkable than that which concentres an immortality of trial into the space of a brief period. The ruling motive which induced the modification was grace; and however the principle has been perverted by man, and made the instrument of involving the race in ruin, it has been revealed in its real significancy by God, who has made it the instrument of peopling heaven with innumerable myriads of souls who might have been hopelessly lost had not His government over us admitted the possibility of laying help upon One who was mighty and able to save. In redemption, God illustrated it according to its true scope and in its genuine spirit. It was engrafted upon the economy of man's religion, that men might speedily achieve a destiny of incalculable glory, or, failing in the trial, might yet be rescued from complete and universal perdition.

Representation of grace.

It must not be forgotten that although blood, or unity of race, is the ground of federal representation, yet federal representation is the ground of either benefit or injury from the success or failure of our head. Had Adam stood, we should all have been justified and confirmed in glory by the imputation of his obedience; that imputation would have proceeded immediately upon the federal and not upon the natural unity. Had not Adam been appointed to represent us, the mere circumstance that he was our first parent would not have involved us in the legal consequences of his sin, nor would it have entitled us to the legal rewards of his righteousness. His fall is ours, because in the covenant we were included in him. Without this federal relation we should have been born in the same relations to God in which he was created. His character would have affected us only in the way of example, education and influence; but not in the way of imputation. It is not by the law of propagation, or the principle that like begets like, that we are born sinners. Sin does not belong to the essence of man—it is a separable accident; and as propagation determines the species and not its accidents, it could never shape our character. Our blood relation to Adam would only settle the fact that we must be men, and not beasts or plants; it would not determine whether we should be holy or sinful men. That would depend upon the state in which it was fit that God should introduce us into a state of personal probation. That would be determined by the same law which determined the character of Adam when he came from the hands of his Maker —a law which renders it absolutely necessary that we should be endowed with all the habits and dispositions that qualify us for the destiny we are appointed to work out. The natural tie determines only who are represented; the federal tie actually causes them to be represented. We sinned in Adam, and fell with him in his first transgression, because the covenant was made with him for us, and not because we have sprung from his loins. Still, our being sprung

Imputation proceeds from the federal tie,

from his loins is the ground of our being represented by him.

and not from the natural.

If natural descent regulated the transmission of character, then no reason can be given why the children of saints should not be born holy. They are themselves new creatures, and why are not their descendants born after this type? To say that they generate as men, and not as saints, is to give up the question, for to generate simply as man is to generate without character. To say that they must generate according to their first type as sinners is to give up the question in another form, for the first type of Adam was holiness. Sin was a superinduced state, and if he had to generate according to his first type, all would have been born holy.

Two all-pervading principles.

These two modifications of moral government—the limitation of probation as to time, and the limitation of probation as to persons, have introduced two principles which pervade every dispensation of religion to our race—the principle of justification and the principle of imputation. They are the very key-notes both of the legal and evangelical covenants. Strike them away from the economy of God toward man, and the whole Bible would be stripped of all its significancy. They are principles grounded in grace, springing from the free and spontaneous goodness of God—purposes of kindness of which nature and reason gave no prophecy nor hint, and therefore necessitating that the religion pervaded and conditioned by them must be supernaturally revealed. They imply a covenant, and in the very nature of the case a covenant is not an inference of reason.

The condition of the covenant positive.

I. We have already seen that the dispensation of religion, commonly called the Covenant of Works, as founded in a goodness and contemplating a reward which nature could not have anticipated, necessarily implies the intervention of revelation. The condition of the covenant brings out another peculiarity which is incidental to a revealed system, and which

is equally removed from the suggestions of human reason. I allude to the distinction betwixt moral and positive duties. The prohibition which God gave to the first pair in the garden of Eden was not grounded in essential rectitude, but in sovereign command. In itself considered, the fruit of the forbidden tree was no more inconsistent with the image of God in man than the fruit of any other tree in the garden. It was a sin to eat of it, not because the thing was inherently wrong, but because it was expressly forbidden.

Butler on the difference betwixt moral and positive duties.

The distinction betwixt the two classes of duties has hardly been resolved by Bishop Butler with his usual precision. He makes the difference to lie in the circumstance that in the one case we see, and in the other we do not see, the reason of the command. "Moral precepts," he remarks, "are precepts the reason of which we see; positive precepts are precepts the reasons of which we do not see. Moral duties arise out of the nature of the case itself prior to external command. Positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command, nor would they be duties at all were it not for such command received from Him whose creatures and subjects we are." And yet Bishop Butler admits that the positive duty, in so far as it is imposed by an authority which we are morally bound to obey, is in that respect to be considered as moral. But that is simply saying that considered as a *duty* at all it is moral. We see the only reason which makes it obligatory upon us, and consequently, according to the distinction in question, it takes its place among the moral and not among the positive precepts—that is, the distinction annihilates itself. It admits in one breath that there are *duties* which as *duties* may be regarded as positive, and in the very next affirms that as *duties* they are not positive.

The real difference.

The real difference is grounded in the relation of the thing commanded to the Divine nature. When the thing commanded springs from the holiness of God, or the essential rectitude of the Divine

Being, the precept is moral; when the thing commanded springs from the free decisions of the Divine will, or the free determinations of Divine wisdom, the precept is positive. The moral could not have been otherwise than commanded; the positive might not have been commanded. The moral is eternal and necessary right; the positive instituted and mutable law. The moral is written upon the conscience of every responsible being; the positive is made known by express revelation. The moral is the image of God's holiness; the positive is the offspring of the Divine will. One is essential; the other made right. The immediate ground of obligation in respect to both is the same—the supreme authority of God. The positive, in so far as the form of duty is concerned, is moral; in so far as the matter is concerned it is arbitrary. The moral obligation in respect to one is as perfect and complete as in respect to the other. We are as much bound to obey God enjoining the indifferent, and thus making it cease to be indifferent, as when He enjoins the eternal rules of rectitude.

Butler on the preference of the moral.

In case of a collision between the moral and positive, Bishop Butler gives the preference to the moral, on a ground which can hardly stand examination, to wit: that we can perceive a "reason for the preference and none against it"—that is, because in the one case we see the reason of the command, and in the other we do not. But although we do not see the reason why the thing is commanded, we do see the reason why it is obligatory. We do not see why God has selected this rather than any other positive institution, but, being selected, we do see the reason why we are bound to respect it. The will of God is the highest formal ground of obligation, and when that will is known to us, nothing can be added to make the duty more perfect. The positive, therefore, is as completely binding, creates as complete a moral obligation, as the moral, and hence no reason for preference can be found in the formal authority of the precepts. The true reason is unquestionably the one which

he next assigns, "that positive institutions are means to a moral end, and the end must be acknowledged more excellent than the means." This relation proceeds from the very nature of the case—the positive, as decrees of wisdom are subsidiary to the ends of holiness. They are the creatures of a will regulated necessarily by right, and subordinating every contingent determination to essential and eternal good. God's nature determines His will. What, therefore, contradicts essential rectitude ceases to be the will of God. The command fails whenever the contradiction emerges. There is consequently no conflict of duties—the positive is *ipso facto* repealed. To assert otherwise is to assert that God can annihilate the moral; that He can make virtue to be vice and vice to be virtue, truth to be a crime and a lie to be duty; that He can deny Himself.

Peculiar fitness of the positive as the condition.

Under a dispensation which was to try the fidelity of man as a servant preparatory to his introduction into a higher state, there was a peculiar fitness in making the matter of the trial turn upon positive observances. This species of precept brings the will of the master to bear distinctly, in its naked character as will, upon the will of the subject. The whole issue resolves itself into a question of authority. The case is simply, Which shall be the supreme, the will of man or the will of God? The whole doctrine of sin and holiness in their last determinations is found precisely here. Sin is essentially selfishness, as we shall see hereafter; holiness in a creature is the complete submergence of his will in the will of his Maker. "I have a right to be and do as I please," is the language of sin. "The will of God should alone be done," is the language of obedience. The very core of moral distinctions, the central principle upon which men are determined to be either sinful or holy, is brought out into trial under circumstances which make it certain that it shall be a trial purely without foreign and extraneous influences, an unmixed trial of its supremacy in man, by making the question of his destiny turn immediately upon

a positive command. The very depths of his moral nature were sounded and explored in that command. We can conceive of no mode of probation better suited to the end in view. We have seen already the relation in which the will must stand to our moral dispositions and habits in order to make them personal and reflective principles; to translate them from the sphere of tendencies and instincts into that of intelligent, conscious, voluntary activity. The end to be attained is that the finite creature shall make God its supreme end; the will of God its supreme law; the glory of God its highest good. To attain this end the creature must renounce its own self as a law, and determine its will only by the will of God. The degree to which it renounces self-will and embraces the Divine will determines the degree in which it is conformed, consciously and reflectively, to the moral law. If, therefore, the main question is that of the relation of the finite to the infinite will, it ought to be so stated as to rule out all secondary and collateral issues. God's will must come into contact with man's, nakedly and exclusively, as will. The command must seem to be arbitrary—no reason in the nature of the thing presented. The case will then test man's faith in God, and his readiness to follow Him with implicit confidence, simply and exclusively because He is God. There is, consequently, the profoundest wisdom in the Divine dispensation which made the trial of the first pair turn upon a positive command. It brought their wills face to face with the will of God; it asked the question, Who should reign? It made no side issues; it put at once upon test the fundamental principle upon which alone their native purity could be made the ingredients—the fixed contents of their will.

Why the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, so called.

Hence, the tree in relation to which the prohibition was given, and which constitutes the expressed condition of the covenant, is called *The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* Man's conduct in regard to that tree was to determine whether he should choose the good or the evil; whether the type of cha-

racter which he should permanently acquire through the exercise of his will should be holy or sinful. The knowledge spoken of is that practical knowledge which consists in determinations of the will, and not the speculative apprehension or intelligent discernment of moral distinctions. Man already knew the right and the wrong; the law of God was written upon his heart, and the whole constitution of his nature was in unison with the essential and immutable distinctions of the true and the good. But as he was mutable, as that mutability lay in his will, and as his will had to decide whether he should preserve or lose the image of God in which he was created, that which was to determine what his choice should be might well be called his means of knowing, in the sense of *cleaving to* or *embracing*, good or evil. The tree was simply the instrument of trying the human will; and if, instead of the knowledge of good and evil, you call it the tree of the *choice* of good and evil, you will have what I take to be the precise import of the inspired appellation. Knowledge is often put for the practical determinations of the will. Our moral nature is called a practical understanding, and its decisions may therefore be properly represented in terms of knowledge.

This view overturns sundry hypotheses.

This explanation is so natural, so obviously in harmony with the whole design of the prohibition, and so completely accordant with the *usus loquendi* of the Sacred Scriptures, that one is at a loss to conjecture how commentators could have perplexed themselves so grievously as some have done in relation to the nature and functions of the tree. The difficulty has arisen, in most cases, from not perceiving the fitness of a positive precept as the immediate matter of man's trial. Hence, the Mosaic account has appeared unreasonable and absurd, and various hypotheses have been invented to bring it within the sphere of our notions of propriety. One finds in the whole description of the paradisaical state a figure to illustrate the operations of sense and reason. Another finds in the nature of the two prominent trees of the garden, and

the effects of their fruit upon man's physical constitution, the ground of the prohibition in the one case and the permission in the other, and the origin of their peculiar names. We are gravely told that the tree of life bore healthful and nutritious fruit, and was specially calculated to immortalize the frame; it was a tree of life, because it secured and perpetuated life. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, on the other hand, was "a hurtful, poisonous tree;"[1] and the prohibition in regard to it was only a salutary premonition of danger proceeding from the apprehension of God that Adam, if left to himself, might poison his system. The import of the command was simply, Do not poison thyself. It was called the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil, because it was a means of teaching man prudence: "If he ate of the fruit of the tree, it would be to his hurt; and by the evil he would suffer, he would become wise and learn in future to be more circumspect." Others, again—and in this opinion the Dutch divines of the Federalist school generally concur—regard this tree as a sacramental symbol. The notion which they mean to convey may be right enough, but the language is altogether inappropriate A sacramental symbol is at once a sign and a seal. Of what was this tree a sign? Not of the prohibition. It was the very matter of the prohibition—the thing itself, and not a representative. Not of the moral law or the principle of universal obedience. That whole principle was involved in the issue of man's conduct in relation to the tree. It was not a putative, but a real guilt; not a symbolical, but a real sin that he would commit in eating of the forbidden fruit. The entire law, in that which determines its formal character as law or an expression of the Divine will, was itself broken in the contempt of the Divine authority, which the eating of the fruit involved. Hence, we cannot, without a violent catachresis, make that sacramental and symbolical which signified and sealed nothing but itself.

The effects of the fruit not physical.

This tree not a sacrament.

[1] Knapp, i., p. 385.

The prohibition did not represent, but was itself, the condition of the first dispensation of religion. What those who adopt this view mean to condemn by making the tree symbolical is the preposterous notion, fit only for Socinians and Rationalists, that this tree was the sole condition of the covenant; so that man might have violated the moral law, and yet if he abstained from this fruit he could not have been subject to death: death was an evil specifically annexed to this prohibition and to nothing else.

The positive, however, cannot supersede the moral, written upon the heart.

It is obvious, however, from what has already been said, that the positive can neither supersede nor repeal the moral law. That law was written upon the heart, and its obligation could no more be revoked than the nature of man destroyed or the holiness of God expunged. That law, in the conviction of good and ill desert with which it was attended in the conscience, contained moreover an explicit promise to obedience and an explicit threat to disobedience. Hence, there needed no revelation to communicate in relation to it what man knew already, and knew from the constitution of his own mind. The only thing in regard to which supernatural teaching was required was the positive precept and the penalty under which it was enforced. That

It was added to the moral, and man placed under a twofold law.

was placed on the same footing of authority with the moral law by the express will of God. The effect of this revelation was to make the whole law under which man was placed twofold, and to render it necessary that he should obey both in order that his obedience might be perfect. The positive was added to the moral, not substituted in the place of it, and enforced under the same sanction; and to fail in either was to fail in both. The import of the positive command is, that over and above those eternal rules of right which spring from the necessary relations betwixt God and the creature, and which were already fully revealed in the very structure of the moral understanding, there was now imposed upon man by external revelation a positive precept to

which the same penalty was attached which conscience connected with the moral law. His obligations were enlarged, and not contracted. This results from the very nature of the case. Had man sinned by falsehood, malice, cruelty, or any other breach of the law written upon his heart, the consequences would have been the same as those which followed the eating of the forbidden fruit. But the question of his allegiance to God could evidently be brought more speedily to a crisis by the intervention of a positive command. The issue would be brought on by the natural appetite and desires of the flesh, and will be arrayed face to face with will by the collision which harmless lust superinduced with command. In this way the question could be raised in the human soul whether the formal principle of obligation to the whole moral law should be supremely respected or not. Hence, the positive is all that appears in the narrative, not because it was all that was real in the covenant, but because it was all that needed revelation to teach it, and because it was the only point in relation to which the question of obedience was likely to come to an issue; it was the only point in which a real trial of man's fidelity was likely to be made. Hence, the condition of the covenant must not be restricted to the positive command. It was the whole law under which man was placed, moral and positive—the whole rule of duty, whether internally or externally made known.

The question of man's allegiance more speedily and fully determined through the positive,

yet man was placed under the whole law.

That the moral law was enjoined upon him under the same sanction as the positive precept we know, not only from the testimony of conscience, but from the express teachings of Scripture in other parts of the sacred volume. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, makes the merit of righteousness and the demerit of sin the fundamental doctrine of moral government. What those gain who perfectly obey is life; what those incur who disobey is death; and, what is

Scripture confirms this view.

remarkable, he represents the heathen as knowing that those who flagrantly transgress the moral law are worthy of death. The wages of sin, he assures us—and sin is the transgression of any law of God—the wages of sin is death. The whole scheme of redemption proceeds upon this postulate. The law as law, and without reference to the distinction of positive and moral, is and must be enforced by a penal sanction, or it degenerates into mere advice. There is another consideration which is decisive, and which I do not remember ever to have seen presented, and that is that unless the moral law, through the conviction of good and ill desert, had connected favour with obedience, and death with disobedience, the sanction of the positive precept must have been wholly unintelligible. It could not have been a moral motive. It could only have addressed itself to our hopes and fears, and operated upon us as caresses and kicks operate upon a brute. But the feeling that he who disobeyed *ought* to die, that there was a ground in justice and in right for his being accursed, could not have arisen unless there were previously in the soul the formal notion of justice. Moral obligation, as contradistinguished from mere inducement, could not have been conceived. But given the primitive cognition of justice, and of moral obligation as involving the notion of merit and demerit, and then the case is plain. The will of God creates the positive duty; that will lays a moral ground for obedience; transgression, therefore, becomes morally a crime, and the conscience naturally connects it with death as its just and righteous retribution. Hence, the obligation and authority of the moral law are presupposed in order that the obligation and authority of the positive might be understood. Man cannot be dealt with as a moral being by positive precepts without taking for granted the presence and power of these primitive cognitions, upon which the very essence of the moral depends.

Moreover, without the moral law the positive precept could have had no force.

The importance of accurate notions in relation to what

was the *condition* of the Covenant of Works depends upon this, that our opinions on this point materially modify our notions concerning the primitive condition of man. If the positive precept were the sole condition of the threatening, then either—(1) we must suppose that man was in a state of comparative infancy, and that God was leading him by a process of sensible discipline to the expansion and growth of his moral and intellectual nature—was training him, as a father trains a child, to just notions of truth and virtue, and with condescending kindness accommodated his instructions, in the selection of striking analogies from the sphere of sense, to his tender capacities; which is to deny that man was under a moral government in its strict and proper acceptation, because that supposes that he is fully competent to obey, that he has all the necessary furniture of knowledge, habits and strength which the law presupposes, and that he apprehends thoroughly his true posture and relations—or, (2) we must assume with Warburton that death was not so much a penalty as a failure to attain a supernatural good, and that the only effect of disobedience was to remand him to his original condition. All such incongruities are completely obviated by the explanation which has been given. The tree was a test of man's obedience; it concentrated his probation upon a single point, and implicitly contained the whole moral law.

Importance of this discussion.

II. The next and most important point is the promise which was to crown the successful trial of the pair. Everything depends upon the nature of that promise. If it were nothing more, as some have maintained from the silence of the historian, than the general expectation of impunity, and of the continuance of his present state of favour during the period of his innocence, man certainly gained nothing by his transfer to the garden of Eden but the enlargement of his duties by the addition of a positive command. The dispensation was one of restraint rather than of liberty; an abridgment of his

The promise of the covenant.

privileges rather than the concession of new advantages. It is true that Moses says nothing directly of a promise; he gives no intimation of the nature of the reward which was proposed to fidelity, nor does he even affirm that one was proposed; but the whole tenor of the narrative bears upon its face that God was meditating the good of his creature, and that the restrictions which he imposed looked to blessings of which these restrictions were a very cheap condition. There was not only, in no proper sense, a covenant, but there was no modification of the period of trial involved in the notion of moral government—there was no limitation to the extent of man's probation—unless there was some special promise annexed to the peculiarities of his present circumstances. It does not follow, moreover, that because the promise is not recorded in the brief history of the transaction, therefore the promise did not exist. It may be implied from the nature of the case, or it may be articulately stated in other portions of the sacred volume. The omission here may be supplied by other texts, and by what we are taught concerning the import of the Divine dispensations toward man. Unless the Scriptures directly or indirectly authenticate a promise, we are not to presume that a promise was made. What is not contained in positive declarations, or deduced by necessary inference, we are not to receive as the word of God. Now I maintain that the Scriptures, indirectly, teach us that there *must* have been a promise, and positively declare what the promise was. I am willing to admit that nothing can be inferred from the threatening. We cannot deduce one contrary from another. The sole promise involved in a threat is impunity as long as the threatening is respected.

Moses says nothing directly respecting it.

The Scriptures must arbitrate, and they do teach us on this subject, both indirectly and positively.

1. But it is morally certain that a peculiar promise of some sort must have been given, dependent upon a limited obedience, from the circumstance that Adam was made the representative of the race. He could not have been treated

as a public person and yet placed under the law of perpetual innocence. To suppose this were to suppose the monstrous anomaly that his descendants might have successively come into being, and yet without being justified have been exempt from the possibility of sin, or in case of sin have been exempt from the penalty of transgression. If there were no limit to his probation, he could never be justified; they, therefore, could never be justified through him. The moral condition of both would be contingent and precarious. But as they were on trial only in him, they must be either preserved from sin by special grace, or in case of sin be preserved from the imputation of guilt. That moral agents should exist in circumstances of this sort is utterly preposterous.[1] Hence, the constitution which made Adam a representative, and which put the race on trial in him, contains on the face of it a limitation of probation. There was a period when the scene should be closed, and when his destiny and that of his descendants should be determined either for sin or holiness. Before they were born it was to be settled, and settled by him, under what law they should be born, whether that of righteousness or death. Every passage of Scripture which teaches that Adam was a public person, and that his posterity sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression, teaches by necessary implication that the probation was designed to be definite, and that there was the same opportunity of securing justification as of incurring condemnation. There is a beautiful harmony in the whole scheme of God, and, whether in nature or in grace, you cannot strike out a part without destroying the symmetry of the whole. I cannot forbear to notice, too, that those who account for the propagation of sin upon the law of generation alone cannot upon their theory infer any provision for justification in the Adamic economy from the universal prevalence of sin and death. If men are not condemned in Adam,

The promise argued from Adam's headship, as it is taught in the Scriptures.

[1] See Ridgely, vol. i., p. 317.

but only inherit his nature by the law of descent, there is no reason to postulate a constitution in which they might have been justified through him, and there is no reason to infer that he or any of his race had in his state of innocence the prospect of ever being confirmed in holiness. But upon the hypothesis of representation the possibility of justification is an inevitable inference.

More Scripture teachings.

2. It is besides expressly declared that the law was ordained unto life. Obedience is throughout the Scriptures as indissolubly associated with life as disobedience is associated with death. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."[1] "Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."[2] This passage is decisive, as its design is evidently to show the nature of the dispensation under which man was placed in innocency as preparatory to a just apprehension of the provisions of the Gospel. The promise of eternal life is no part of the law as such; it is peculiar to it by virtue of the limited probation upon which man was placed. The law of creation was life during the period of obedience, and eternal life could only be the reward of eternal obedience. But the law as modified by grace was patient continuance in well-doing for a season, and then everlasting security and bliss. This was the law under which all men were placed in Adam; this the promise explicitly announced to them as the incentive to fidelity. "And the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death."[3] "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."[4] This passage teaches unequivocally that the law proposed a scheme of justifica-

[1] Matt. xix. 17.
[2] Rom. ii. 6, 7.
[3] Rom. vii. 10.
[4] Rom. viii. 3, 4.

tion—a scheme by virtue of which men could be reputed not merely innocent, but righteous, and that the reason why eternal life has not been secured by it is not the inadequacy of its own promise, but the failure of man to comply with the condition. No candid mind can weigh these texts without being impressed with the conviction that Paul views man as having been placed in a state in which he might have secured everlasting life by a temporary obedience. The law contemplated man as under a promise, to which the preservation of his innocence for a given period would have entitled him; and this promise necessarily implies the possibility of justification. Hence, we are fully warranted, notwithstanding the silence of Moses, in saying that the essential principles of moral government were so modified by the goodness of God as to render it possible for man to pass from a servant to a son, from labour to an indefectible inheritance.

3. But the text last quoted gives us a third argument, which is even more conclusive still; and that is, that the work of redemption has only achieved for us the same blessings—the same in kind, however they may differ in degree—which the law previously proposed as the reward of obedience. Christ has done for us what the law was ordained to do, but failed to do only through the fault of man. Whatever, therefore, Christ has purchased, Adam might have gained. The life which Christ bestows was in the reach of Adam; the glory which Christ imparts was accessible to our first head and representative. Whatever Christ has procured for us, he has procured under the provisions of the law which conditioned human religion in Eden. The principles of the dispensation then and there enacted have not been changed; they have only been carried out and fulfilled. From the nature of the dispensation under which the second Adam was placed, we may learn that which pertained to the first; and the result of the comparison will be the confirmation of every doctrine we have stated in relation to our first father's posture. *First*, Christ was a public person; so was Adam.

The promise through Christ the same with the promise to Adam.

Each represented his seed. *Secondly,* Christ's probation was limited; it was confined to the period of his humiliation. Adam's, to preserve the analogy, must have been limited also. *Thirdly,* Christ had the promise of justification to life as the reward of his temporary obedience; the same must have been the case with Adam. Hence, through the work of Christ, and the relations of that work to the law, we are explicitly taught that eternal life was, and must have been, the promise of the Covenant of Works.

4. As the promise through Christ is essentially the same as the promise to Adam, we are prepared, in the next place, to consider what the life is that was promised. The term in Scripture not only indicates existence, but also the property of well-being; it is existence in a state of happiness. Eternal life is the same as eternal well-being or happiness. As long as man's happiness was contingent, he was not in a state of life, in that high and emphatic sense which redemption secures. Innocence is the condition of life, but it is not life itself. There are two things which belong to life. *First,* It implies a change of inward state or character. *Secondly,* A change of outward state or relation. In relation to Adam, the inward change would have consisted in removing the mutability of his will. If he had kept the law, he would have been rendered indefectible in holiness by an influence of Divine grace moulding his habits so completely into his will that he never could have departed from the good pleasure of God. He would have attained, by the blessing of God, in the way of reward to his obedience, that moral necessity which is the noblest freedom and which constitutes the highest perfection of a rational creature. His security would not have been the result of habit. No course of obedience, however protracted and however it might be constantly diminishing the danger of transgression, would ever have rendered man invulnerable to sin. The mortal point, like the heel of Achilles, would always be found in mutability of will. A probationary state necessarily implies the

The life promised was eternal.

possibility of defection and the relations of the will to the law in such a state are essentially different from its relations in a state of justification. This great benefit, therefore, a will immutably determined to the good, would have characterized the life of the first man if he had been faithful to his trust.

The second element is a change of relation. He would have been adopted as a son, and no longer under the law as a servant. Whatever of joy, privilege, blessedness and glory are implied in this relation was held out to Adam as a motive to fidelity. Confirmed in holiness; admitted into the closest communion with God; treated as a child; honoured as an heir; what more could God have done for him? This was life, eternal life; and this life in both its elements would have accrued from his justification. Temporary obedience, being accepted as perpetual innocence, would have secured perpetual innocence; and probation being closed by a full compliance with the conditions—which is justification—would have rendered man a fit subject for receiving, as he was able to bear it, from the infinite fullness of God. To sum up all in a single word, the promise to Adam was eternal life; and eternal life includes the notions of indefectible holiness and of adoption, which are inseparably linked together.

From this exposition of the promise we need have no difficulty as to what the Scriptures teach in relation to the tree of life. It is very idle to suppose that it received its title from any property that it had to perpetuate existence or to prevent the incursion of disease. It was merely a symbol or memorial of the promise—a token to man, constantly reminding him through his senses of what great things God had prepared for him. It is perhaps because this tree was the exponent of the promise that Moses has not expressly recorded it. Some have inferred from the precautions taken to prevent man from eating of its fruit after his defection that it had some innate virtue to stay the tide of death. We should rather infer that these precautions were solemn

The tree of life was a seal of the promise.

signs that he had forfeited all right to the blessing it symbolized. He was not allowed to approach the tree because he had lost that from which the tree derived its significancy and importance. To have allowed him to touch the sign might have been construed into the assumption that he might yet compass the reality. In conformity with this explanation are all the subsequent allusions in the sacred volume. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."[1] "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life."[2] The tree of life is here evidently a figure of eternal glory.

Warburton's view criticised.

I cannot close this consideration of the promise of the Covenant without calling your attention to the ingenious and paradoxical theory which Warburton has put forth in his Divine Legation of Moses. He admits the distinction which I have elsewhere drawn between man's natural state under moral government and the supernatural state in which he was placed in the garden. He lays down the essential principles of moral government with sufficient accuracy, except that he represents repentance as a natural atonement for our violations of the moral law. But he errs grievously in the low estimate which he puts upon the character and qualifications of man in his primitive condition. He degrades the image of God to the mere possession of the attribute of reason, and contends that immortality is no part of our native inheritance. Man was when he came from the hands of God a subject of law, and rewardable and punishable for his actions; but rewards and punishments were equally temporary. Nature contained no hope of immortality. The design of the revealed dispensation was to give man the prospect of endless existence, to exempt him from the possibility of death. As immortality was a free gift, it was fit that it should be suspended upon an arbitrary condition. Man's disobedience only remanded him to his original con-

[1] Rev. ii. 7. [2] Rev. xxii. 14.

dition of mortality. He had forfeited his being. He was put back where he was before, under a pure system of moral government. Christ restored to us what we lost in Adam, mere immortality. His sacrifice was an arbitrary appointment by which God was pleased to communicate the gift a second time, and faith in Him is an arbitrary condition on which the possession is suspended to us. The peculiarity of this theory is, that the supernatural does not modify the natural, but is co-ordinate with it. Moral government goes on as it would go on without the supernatural; the supernatural is only an expedient by which the subject of this government is rendered immortal. Of course, after what has already been said, it would be worse than idle to attempt an articulate refutation of a scheme which only excites your wonder that a man of genius and learning should have adopted it, elaborately expounded it and persuaded himself, and tried to persuade his readers, that he had found the key to unlock all the mysteries of Christianity. Paradox was the bane of Warburton's life. But he occasionally develops principles which throw light upon the dispensations of God. Unfortunately, he develops them only to misapply them.

The penalty of disobedience.

III. The last thing to be considered in relation to the Covenant of Works is the penalty annexed to disobedience. That is contained in the threatening, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." What was really the death that was denounced has been a question variously answered, according to the views entertained by different expositors of the articulate doctrines of the Gospel with respect to sin and redemption. The type of a man's theological opinions can be readily determined by the estimate which he puts upon the judicial consequences of the first sin. Warburton makes the death of the covenant to be nothing more than the remanding of man to his original condition of mortality. He was created subject to the law of dissolution. His existence was destined under the appoint-

Warburton's theory.

ment of nature to a total extinction. The covenant proposed to exalt him to a state of immortality. Had he kept the injunction to abstain from the forbidden fruit, he would have been endowed with the prerogative of an endless existence. His failure only placed him where he was before. There was properly neither fall nor apostasy; there was simply the missing of a proffered boon. Others, again, anxious to evade the proof of original sin derived from the sufferings and death of infants, exclude the dissolution of the body and temporal diseases from the death of the covenant. These they make the original appointments of nature, and not the penal visitations of transgression. They suppose that men would have suffered and died whether they had sinned or not. Others, again, anxious to mitigate the malignity of sin, and to do away with the doctrine of the endless punishment of the wicked, have resolved the whole punishment of man into the death of the body and the evils which precede and accompany it. In all these cases it is clear that theologic prejudice is the real father of the different theories advanced, and that none of them are drawn from a candid and dispassionate comparison of the teachings of the word of God. Men have put their opinions into the Bible, and have not extracted their doctrines from it; they have made rather than interpreted Scripture. The truth upon this subject cannot be reached by the dissection of words and phrases. Scripture must be compared with Scripture, and the whole tenor of revelation in relation to sin and redemption must be carefully studied, in order that any just conception may be formed of the real significancy of that portentous word, *death*. The result of such an examination will be, that it is a generic term expressing the idea of misery, without respect to its form or kind, judicially inflicted. Any and every pain, considered as a penal visitation, is death. As life is not simply existence, but well-being, so death, its opposite, is not the negation of existence, but the negation of all the

Another theory.

Still another.

The true view of the penalty.

pleasure of existence. As to live, in Scripture phrase, is to be happy, so to die is to be miserable. But is all misery or all pain penal in its origin? If so, the question as to the extent of the penalty can be easily settled. Now, I maintain that under a just and righteous government there can be no suffering without guilt. The innocent are entitled to the Divine favour, and to the bliss which results from it, as long as they maintain their integrity. Those who most strenuously deny that the creature, in any strict and proper sense, can merit, yet as strenuously maintain that it is inconsistent with justice to visit the sinless with pain. If they have no right to a reward over and above the pleasure of existence in the state in which they were created, the equity of God forbids that a being given in goodness should be made a burden. The form in which the notion of justice is first manifested in the conscience is through the conviction of good and ill desert, connecting well-being with well-doing, and misery with guilt. A discipline of virtue through evil supposes a dispensation of grace in consequence of which sin has been pardoned, and offences come to be considered as faults to be corrected, and not as crimes to be punished; it supposes at the same time the presence of evil as of a thing to be removed and abolished. Moral discipline, in this aspect, is possible only to pardoned sinners. But a discipline through evil where no sin has entered, a discipline through suffering where there has been no crime to be corrected, is contradictory to every just notion of righteous retribution. Hence, we have no hesitation in saying that all misery, all pain, all suffering, all that interferes with the comfort and satisfaction of existence, all that is contradictory to well-being, is penal in its origin. Not a pang would ever have been felt, not a sigh would ever have been heaved, not a groan would ever have been uttered, not a tear would ever have been shed, if sin had not invaded the race. All physical evil is penal; all misery is penal; all pain is death. Hence, to inquire into the extent of the penalty is simply to inquire into the extent of

It includes all pain.

the misery to which man has rendered himself subject by his apostasy from God. As he would have been free from all evil by the preservation of his integrity, so every calamity that he experiences must be referred, for its ultimate ground, to the guilt of the first sin. The condition in which he now finds himself is the condition to which his sin reduced him, and in this condition we read the true interpretation of the threat, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." What man became that day, or the change which took place in his state and prospects, is the death that was denounced.

Death spiritual.

1. There was a change in the habits and dispositions of his soul. He lost the image of God. His nature took the type of the evil that he chose. His character became permanently and hopelessly corrupt. The very point to be settled by his probation was the fixed impression of his moral character. To choose the good was to become immutably holy and happy; to choose the evil was to become hopelessly corrupt and miserable. The bondage of sin was the necessary consequence of the choice of sin. He at once lost all power to will or to choose what was acceptable to God. This loss of the image of God, or of the principle of holiness, is commonly styled *spiritual death*, as being the death of the soul in respect to what truly constitutes its life. It has been made a question how Adam could all at once have been deprived of those spiritual perceptions and concreated propensities to good which he inherited as the birth-right of his being. It has been asked how a single sin could all at once have depraved the entire constitution and perverted the whole current of his nature. If we were left to conjecture and speculation, we might suppose that as a habit is not likely to be formed from a single act, the principle of rectitude would still remain, though weakened in its power, and by vigorous and systematic efforts might recover from the shock which to some extent had disordered the moral constitution. Bishop Butler speaks with hesitation in relation to the degree of

injury which might be expected to accrue from the first full overt act of irregularity, though he has no backwardness in regard to the natural results of a confirmed habit. Each sin has not only a tendency to propagate itself, but to derange the order of the moral constitution; but as the propagation of itself in the formation of specific habits is obviously gradual, it would seem that the general derangement would also be progressive. The difficulty is created by overlooking the circumstance of a judicial condemnation, and not properly discriminating betwixt holiness and morality. We are to bear in mind that as we are under a penal sanction as well as possessed of a moral constitution, sin has judicial consequences which must enter into the estimate of the extent of injury sustained by the inner man. We must further recollect that as holiness, which is the foundation of the virtuous principle, the life of all merely moral habits, the keystone of the arch which maintains an upright nature in its integrity, consists essentially in union with God, whatever offends Him must destroy it. This is precisely what every sin does; it provokes His curse, breaks the harmony of the soul with Him, and removes that which is the fundamental principle of all true excellence. His moral habits may remain as tendencies to so many specific forms of action materially right, but the respect to God has gone. Spiritual life breathes only in the smile of God; the moment that He frowns in anger death invades the soul. It is the judicial consequence of sin, and hence every sin, like a puncture of the heart, is fatal to spiritual life. Hence, the universal dominion of sin is a part of the curse—its reign is hopeless in so far as human strength is concerned. One sin entails the everlasting necessity of sin. The law, as we have seen, knows no repentance.

Death temporal.

2. Besides spiritual death, the penalty of the law includes all those afflictions and sufferings of the present life which terminate in the dissolution of the body. The fatigue and pain connected with labour or the fulfilment of any of our natural functions;

the diseases to which we are constantly exposed; the wear and tear of our physical frame; the decrepitude of age; the vexations and disappointments of life; the final separation of the soul from the body, and the resolution of the body into its original dust,—all these constitute what divines are accustomed to denominate *temporal death*. To this must be added the disorder which has taken place in external nature; the change in the temper and disposition of beasts; the sterility of the earth; its poisons; the deadly exhalations of the atmosphere,—all things which render the earth disagreeable and trying as the abode of man are obviously included in the curse.

Death eternal.

3. Then there is a state of suffering, after the close of the present life, in which first the soul, and afterward both soul and body united, are the subjects of visitations in which God expresses the intensity of His hatred against sin. This last stage of punishment is called, pre-eminently, *the second death*. The Scriptures represent it by figures which impress us with an awful idea of its horrors. It is a worm that never dies—a lake that burns with fire and brimstone. What the sufferings of the lost actually are we are unable to conceive; but we know them to be terrific, because they are designed to express the infinite opposition of God to sin, and because they produced the unspeakable tragedy of Calvary. To which must be added that they are as endless as the existence of the soul. This death is called *eternal death*. When, therefore, we speak of the penalty of the Covenant, we must be understood to include the bondage to sin, the subjection of man to all the evils of this life, and to the still greater evils of the life to come—the whole of the misery which the fall has brought upon the race. When it is said that these evils are the penalty of the Covenant, it is not meant that they all result directly from it, or that they were all visited upon the person of the first transgressor. Adam did not suffer every species of pain and calamity to which any of his descendants have been exposed. But the meaning is, that

the first sin prepared the way for them all; it introduced a state of sin from which has resulted a general state of death. All the ills that flesh is heir to are either the immediate or remote consequences of the first transgression. The threatening of death had reference to that whole fallen and miserable condition into which the race would be plunged by disobedience.

IV. We have now seen the nature of the dispensation under which man was placed in the garden of Eden. We have considered the Condition, the Promise and the Penalty, and have been struck with the goodness of God in His gracious purpose to exalt the creature to a higher state, and to make him an inheritor of richer blessings, than his natural relations would authorize him to expect. He had an easy work and a great reward. It remains to consider his conduct under this remarkable display of Divine benevolence. How long he stood we have no means of conjecturing—not long enough to be the father of a son. The circumstances connected with his fall are briefly narrated by the historian, and the account which we have may be called, The natural history of sin in relation to our race.

Man's conduct.

1. In the first place, it is evident that the record contains a true history of facts as they occurred, and not an allegory setting forth the conflict of the higher and lower principles of our nature—of reason and sense; nor yet an apologue, illustrating the change from primitive simplicity to refinement, luxury and corruption. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was adapted to the trial of man's integrity, and is precisely the kind of test which the nature of the case demanded. The tree of life was a fit symbol of the promise by which man was encouraged to obedience, and the threatening must surely be taken in its literal sense. The narrative, moreover, contains decisive evidence that sin did not originate from any collision between appetite and reason; it originated

The record is a history of facts.

as much in the higher principles themselves as in the lower. Our first mother was prompted by the desire of knowledge; she saw that the tree was suited to make one wise, as well as fair to the eyes and attractive to the taste.

An evil spirit present.

2. In the next place, we must recognize, in the serpent, the presence of an evil spirit who undertook the office of a tempter. Sin was already in the universe. That he who is described by the Saviour as a Liar and a Murderer from the beginning was the real but disguised agent in the transaction, is obvious from repeated allusions to the subject by the writers of the New Testament.[1] That this was the opinion of the Jews before the time of Christ is apparent from the Book of Wisdom.[2] The promise, too, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, has evidently a much higher significancy than any literal application to the serpent-tribe could give it. An ingenious effort to explain the malice of the Devil has been given by Kurtz in his Bible and Astronomy.

The sin was deliberate.

3. The sin of man was deliberate. He had the case before him. It was not an instance of sudden infirmity. The case was argued out, and judgment rendered upon the argument.

It was the rejection of God.

4. It involved a deliberate rejection of God as the good of the soul—a deliberate rejection of the glory of God as the end of existence. Hence, it was unbelief, apostasy, pride.

Aggravations of it.

5. It was a most aggravated sin—aggravated by the relations of the person to God; by the nature of the act; by its consequences.

V. The relations of man to the covenant since the fall.

Fallen man's relations to the covenant.

1. He is condemned.

2. He has forfeited the promise.

3. Individually under the general principles of moral government.

[1] See John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8; Rev. xii. 9.

[2] Chap. i. 13, 14; ii. 23, 24.

THE FIRST SIN.

[There are three points to be considered—

I. What was the formal nature of the sin?

II. How it was possible that a holy being could sin.

III. The consequences of this sin.

I. What was the formal nature of the sin?—that is, what was the root of it? Was it pride? Was it unbelief?

1. It was a complicated sin; it included in it the spirit of disobedience to the whole law.

2. It was aggravated—(1) by the person; (2) by his relations to God; (3) by the nature of the act; (4) by its consequences.

3. The germ of it was estrangement from God, which is radically unbelief. It was an apostasy, which in falling away from God set up the creature as the good.

II. How could a holy being sin?

1. We must not lower the account so as to remove difficulties. Many make it the growth of an infant to maturity, having its powers quickened by errors and mistakes.

2. Others make it allegorical, representing the conflict of sense and reason. This is contradicted by the narrative. Intellect is prominent in the cause of sin. Eve desired wisdom.

3. Others make it an apologue intended to illustrate the change from primitive simplicity.

4. Others, as Knapp, make the thing venial, but degrade the meaning to physical phenomena.

5. We must regard it as the natural history of sin—the manner in which it was introduced into our world.

6. It is not enough to say that man was mutable; that explains the possibility, but not the immediate cause of sin.

(1.) It was owing to *temptation*. Here explain the nature of temptation.

(2.) Desires might be excited, in themselves innocent, accidentally wrong.

(3.) The general principle of virtue—Watch. Here was the first slip. Desires produced inattention to the circumstances under which they might be indulged; here was a renunciation of the supreme authority of God. Want of thought, want of reflection.

(4.) These desires, by dwelling upon the objects, engross the mind and become inflamed. They become the *good* of the soul. Here was the renunciation of God as the *good*. They prevail upon the will and the act is consummated.

III. Consequences—immediate and remote.

1. Shame and remorse.

2. Loss of the image of God. This a penal visitation. Not the mere force of habit.]

LECTURE XIII.

ORIGINAL SIN.

IF, as we have previously seen, Adam in the Covenant of Works was the representative of all his natural posterity—that is, of all contemplated in the original idea of the race, and descended from him by the ordinary law of propagation—then the condemnation in which he was involved pertains equally to them, and the subjective condition of depravity to which he was reduced by his transgression must also be found in them. They must be at once guilty and corrupt. This state of guilt and corruption, as that in which they begin their individual personal existence, is by one class of divines called *Original Sin*. The phrase includes both the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin, and the inherent depravity which is consequent upon it. In this wide sense it is probably used by the Westminster Assembly of divines. The guilt is the bond of union betwixt the transgression of Adam and the moral condition in which they are born. Others restrict the terms *original sin* exclusively to the corruption in which men are born, though in calling it sin they presuppose that it has been created by guilt. They represent it as a penal condition, but the prominent idea is the moral features of the condition itself, and not the cause by which it has been produced. There is consequently some ambiguity in the phrase. The more common usage is unquestionably

The phrase *Original Sin* as used in its wide sense by the Westminster Assembly of divines; and in its narrow sense by Calvin and others.

that of Calvin, Turrettin and nearly all the Reformed Confessions in which *original sin* and *native depravity* are synonymous terms. The word was introduced by Augustin in his controversy with the Pelagians. He wanted a term by which he could at once represent the moral state, which is antecedent to all voluntary exercises of the individual, which conditions their character and determines the whole type of the spiritual life—that state of sin or pravity in which each descendant of Adam begins his personal history. He called this state of native sin, *original* sin; *first*, because our personal, individual existence begins in it. The species was created holy in Adam, but since Adam every individual of the species commences his temporal being in a state of corruption. Our origin is in sin. In the *next* place, he called it *original* to indicate its close and intimate connection with the first sin of the first man. Adam's transgression, as the beginning and cause of all subsequent human aberrations, was pre-eminently original sin—the original sin—and to indicate its causal relation to all other sins it was called *peccatum originale originans*. The depravity of nature which resulted from it was called *peccatum originale originatum*, and when the phrase *original sin*, without a qualifying epithet, is used, it indicates the originated sin, and in the word *original* points back to the first sin. In the *third* place, he used the phrase to indicate that our inborn corruption was the origin or source of all our actual sins; it stood at the head of all the transgressions of our subsequent life.

Augustin originated the term for three uses.

No doubt, the most prominent idea suggested by the phrase is, that as Adam's transgression stands at the head of all human sins, begins and conditions the series, so the native depravity of each individual stands at the head of all his aberrations and determines the manifestations of his whole moral life. Adam's sin is absolutely original to the species; native depravity relatively original

In this lecture employed in the narrower sense, but the notion of guilt not excluded.

to each individual of the species. In the sense, then, of that inherent corruption in which the descendants of Adam begin their earthly career, I shall employ the term in the present lecture. Still, the notion must not be lost sight of that this inherent corruption could not be strictly and properly sin, unless it were grounded in guilt. If the species had begun to be in the state in which each individual is now born, no blame could have been attached to its irregularities and deformity. If the idea of man as it lay in the Divine mind had included the nature which we now find cleaving to our being, that nature could not have been chargeable with aught that deserved censure. Hence, the notion of guilt underlies all the moral disapprobation which we attach to our present natural condition. It is a penal state—one into which we have fallen, and not one in which we were made. The moral history of the individual does not begin with his own personal manifestation in time; that manifestation has evidently been determined by moral relations to God that have preceded it. Hence, the very term *sin* applied to our present state carries with it the idea of something anterior; it announces it as an originated and not as an original condition. How there can be guilt antecedently to the existence of the individual—a guilt, too, which conditions and fixes the very type of that existence—is a question that must be answered, or it is impossible to vindicate original sin in any other sense than that of misfortune or calamity. If it is not grounded in the ill deserts of the creature, but in the sovereign will and purpose of God, it loses all moral significancy, and is reduced to the æsthetic category of beauty and deformity, or the category of mere physical contrasts. The question of guilt, therefore, must meet us in the discussion of original sin. But as we shall be better able to encounter it when we shall have considered our inherent and native corruption, we remit the investigation of it to the close of our present inquiry. It will come in as the

The question, how guilt can precede existence, must be met;

but it is remitted for the present.

explanation of the state in which we actually find ourselves to be.

Original sin, as the doctrine was taught by all the Reformers.

I. Let us, then, take up the question of native depravity. What is the state in which every man is born? It is amazing with what perfect uniformity all the early Confessions, whether Lutheran or Reformed, represented the teachings of the word of God upon this subject. There is not a discordant voice.

Sin was the mould of man's moral being.

1. In the first place, they unanimously represented this corruption as the very mould of the moral being of every individual of the species. It was prior to all voluntary agency; it was prior to any and every manifestation of consciousness. While Pelagians taught that the individual was created without any moral character at all, and that the habits which he exhibited were the results of his own voluntary acts, the Reformers, following in the footsteps of Paul and Augustin, strenuously maintained that there was a generic and all-comprehensive disposition which lay behind the will in all the manifestations of individual life, and determined the direction which it would always take in the great contrasts of holiness and sin. There was a general habitude which lay at the root of the will and of our whole spiritual being, and which determined the general type which every act of choice must bear. This corruption they represented as *a nature* in the sense of an all-conditioning law—a sense which I have already explained in unfolding the scriptural idea of holiness. So strong was the language of Luther upon this point that he has trodden closely upon the verge of Manichæan forms of expression. He speaks of sin as pertaining to the very substance, the very being, of the soul. He speaks of it not merely as *de natura*, but as *de essentia hominis*, and calls it *peccatum substantiale* or *essentiale*. His design, in these strong expressions, is to point out the intimate connection in which sin stands to the very being of the individual. It is not something which he has acquired—something which

has invaded him in the development of his earthly life. It is interwoven in the very texture of his soul—began with the beginning of his faculties, and inseparably cleaves to them in all their exercises. Sin is the law of his temporal existence. It is his nature in the same sense in which ferocity is the nature of the tiger, cunning the nature of the serpent, and coarseness the nature of the swine. It was an original principle of motion within him, and not an accidental impulse. When man sins, he expresses his inmost moral being. He is so bound up in sin, the fibres of his soul are so intertwined with it, the springs of all his energies are so poisoned by it, that he could as soon cease to be a man, by any power in him, as cease to be a sinner. He lives and moves and thinks and feels in sin. It was precisely in this sense of an all-conditioning law of the moral life that sin was represented as the natural state of fallen man, and this representation contained a protest against every form of error which sought to explain the irregularities of the individual by causes that have sprung up since the commencement of his individual existence. Sin and that existence were synchronous. Sin was the mould, so to speak, in which the faculties of the soul were run. The man and the sinner were twins from the womb, or rather were one.

It was negative — destitution of every holy principle.

2. In the next place, this natural depravity was represented in a twofold point of view, negative and positive. In a negative aspect, it implied the total destitution of all those habits and dispositions which constituted the glory of the first man and enabled him to reflect the image of God. Every principle of holiness was lost. As a nature, it is an all-pervading habit, and exists as an unit or does not exist at all. It must be wholly lost or wholly retained. As a life, it either is or is not. There is no intermediate condition; a man is either in life or death. This total destitution of holiness or spiritual life was called a state of spiritual death; and the Reformers, without a single exception, in the first stages of the Reformation, exhibited the imbecility of man in his natural

state in relation to aught that was holy and divine, as absolute and complete. There is no doctrine which they have more strongly asserted or more vigorously maintained than the hopeless bondage of the will. However Melancthon afterwards modified his doctrine, no Reformer ever expressed the inability of man in more exclusive and uncompromising terms than himself, in the earlier editions of the symbols prepared by his hand.

and positive—an active tendency to all evil.

In its positive aspect, natural depravity included a positive corruption; that is, an active disposition to what was evil and inconsistent with the perfections and holiness of God. It resulted from the nature of man as an active being that if he were deprived of the principle of holiness, he must manifest the opposite. His actions could not be indifferent; they must, as springing from a rational and accountable being, have a moral character of some sort, and if holiness were precluded, nothing but sin remained. Hence, there was a foundation for every species of evil. The determinate habits in different individuals might be very different; some might manifest a proclivity to one form of sin, and others to another. One might give himself to low and degrading lusts, and another might practice a more refined licentiousness. Some might become slaves to sense, and others slaves to the subtler sins of the spirit. Accident and education might determine the definite bias; but all, without exception, would plunge into sin, would contract specific habits of iniquity, and if left to themselves would steadily wax worse and worse. A foundation was laid in every human heart for every form of evil. The poison was there, though it might be repressed by circumstances. All the currents of the human soul were in one general direction; they were from God and toward sin. There was not only nothing good, but there was the germ of all evil; the tendency was to universal and complete apostasy.

The negative and positive aspects of original sin are obviously only different sides of the same thing. The priva-

tion of righteousness is, as Calvin has properly remarked, a general aptitude for sin. The soul cannot exist in a merely negative state; it must affirm something, and where it is precluded from affirming God, it must affirm something that is not God. Where its exercises are not determined by holy love, they will be determined by a love that is not holy.

These but two sides of one thing.

3. In the next place, natural depravity was represented as universal and all-pervading. It extended to the whole man. All his powers and faculties of soul and body were brought under its influence. It was not confined to one department of his being—to the will, as contradistinguished from the understanding, or to the understanding, as contradistinguished from the will; it was not restricted to the lower appetites, as contradistinguished from our higher principles of action; nor did it obtain in the heart alone, considered as the seat of the affections. On the contrary, it was a disease from which every organ suffered. As found in the understanding, it was called blindness of man, spiritual ignorance, folly; as found in the will, it was called rebellion, perverseness, the spirit of disobedience; as found in the affections, it manifested itself as hardness of heart, or a total insensibility to spiritual and Divine attractions. It perverted the imagination, and turned it into the instrument of lust and the pander to low and selfish indulgences. It not only affected all the faculties, so as to produce a total disqualification for any holy or spiritual exercise in any form, whether of cognition or of choice, but it crippled and enervated these faculties in their exercise within the sphere of truth and morality. They were vitiated in relation to everything that wore the image of truth, goodness and beauty.

It was universal and all-pervading.

Here a distinction was made. The fall did not divest man of reason, conscience or taste. This would have been to convert him into another species of being. As reason remained, he still had the power of distinguishing betwixt truth and falsehood;

A distinction made.

conscience still enabled him to distinguish betwixt right and wrong, betwixt a duty and a crime; and taste enabled him to perceive the contrasts in the sphere of the beautiful. The extinction of his spiritual life destroyed the unity of action which pervaded these faculties, and rendered the exercise of them no longer expressions of holy dependence upon God. The mere possession of them has no moral value; it is the mode of using them—it is the principle in which their activity is grounded—that makes them truly good. Now, with the loss of the image of God, these faculties not only lost their unity, but lost their original power. They became diseased; and hence the reason blunders in the sphere of truth, the conscience errs in the sphere of right, and taste stumbles in the sphere of beauty. This distinction Augustin expressed by saying that the fall had deprived us of all supernatural perfections and vitiated those that were natural. The idea which he intended to convey is just, and has been very ably elucidated by Calvin, but the phraseology is certainly objectionable. The image of God in which man was created was in no proper sense supernatural. On the contrary, as we have already shown, it was the only condition in which it is conceivable that man could have come from the hands of God. It was, therefore, his natural state. The form of expression which Augustin ought to have adopted was that of all holy endowments man was completely dispossessed, and his natural endowments were grievously injured.

Augustin's language criticised.

The whole notion of original sin as a subjective state is conveyed by a phrase which, from the controversy with the Remonstrants, has become the general formula for the expression of the doctrine; that phrase is *total depravity*. The epithet *total* is employed in a double sense—(1.) to indicate the entire absence of spiritual life, the total destitution of holiness; (2.) in the next place, to indicate the extent of depravity in relation to the constituent elements of the man; it pervades his whole being or the totality of his constitution. There

The phrase *total depravity*. Three senses of it.

is still a third sense in which its employment might be legitimate, as conveying the notion of a positive habitude of soul in which every form of evil might be grounded—a tendency to the totality of sin. But the word was never used to express the degrees of positive wickedness attaching to human nature. It never was employed to convey the idea that men were as wicked as they could be, or that there were no differences of individual character among them. On the contrary, the most strenuous advocates of total depravity have acknowledged the difference between men and fiends, and betwixt one man and another in reference to moral conduct. While they contend that all are equally dead, they are far from affirming that all are in the same state of putrefaction. There is every gradation, from the man of unblemished honour and integrity to the low and unprincipled knave or cut-throat. They undertook to explain these varieties in the moral features of humanity upon principles which would not conflict with their doctrine of total depravity, showing conclusively that the two things were not, as they could not have been, with any show of decency, confounded.

What it does not mean.

4. In the last place, this depravity was represented as hereditary, as bound up with the law by which the species is propagated. No human being could escape it who came into the world in the ordinary way. It was an inheritance which every man brought with him into the world. The production of his nature as human and his nature as sinful was inseparable. There was no conception, in the ordinary way, which was not a conception in sin—no birth which was not the birth of a sinner. Hence, there could be no exception to the universality of sin which was not also an exception to the usual mode of generation. Whatsoever was born of the flesh was flesh. Hence, *hereditary corruption*, *native depravity* and *original sin* were promiscuously used to convey one and the same idea.

It was hereditary.

I have thus briefly stated what is meant by the doctrine

of original sin, and if true it presents a melancholy, an appalling picture of the moral condition of the race. It is beyond all controversy the thorniest question in the whole compass of theology, but its importance is fully commensurate with its difficulties. Here lies the disease which redemption was designed to remedy, and our conceptions of the provisions of grace must be modified by our conceptions of the need they were arranged to meet. The natural state of man is the key for unlocking the peculiarities of the state into which he is introduced by grace. No man can ever know God in Jesus Christ until he knows himself. If the doctrine is not true, it would seem to be the simplest and easiest thing in nature to refute it. Man is before us; our own consciousness is a volume which we can all to some extent read and understand; and the question is concerning the innermost ground of that consciousness as it pertains to God and to all spiritual good. The doctrine professes to give a transcript of what is found in the soul of man; it takes the phenomena of human life, analyzes them, explains them and reduces them to their principle. If there is an error, it must be in the facts or in the reasoning. The facts, as matters of experience, speak for themselves, and the error, if it lies there, can surely be detected and exposed. The reasoning is short and simple, not at all complicated; there is but a step betwixt the premises and the conclusion, and the error, if it lies there, ought also to be easy of exposure. Under these circumstances, if the doctrine is false, if it is only a caricature and not a true and faithful portrait, is it not strange that the most earnest and self-scrutinizing minds, the most zealous and faithful and devoted saints, have been precisely the persons who have insisted most tenaciously that this is a just account of themselves apart from the grace of God, that this is just what they have found in their own souls, and what observation and Scripture alike teach them to look for in the souls of others? How such a doctrine

The doctrine as thus stated, if true, appalling;

if not true, it ought to be easy to be refuted.

could have originated, obtained currency, been handed down from generation to generation among such men, and been defended with the zeal of a warfare for hearths and altars, is an inexplicable marvel if after all it is a mere libel upon poor human nature. The presumption would seem to be in its favour. It could not have lived and spread and reigned as it has done in the Church of God, if it had no life in it. There must be something in it; there must be a preponderance of truth in it. Men are too much interested not to believe it, to render it credible for a moment that it should have formed a part of the faith of Christendom, if it were not radically true. Still, it may be exaggerated, it may be overwrought, and it becomes us with the utmost candour and solemnity to examine the grounds upon which it has been supposed to rest.

It must be true,

but is it exaggerated?

1. The first thing that claims our notice in investigating the facts upon which the doctrine is grounded, is the universality of sin. Here the Scriptures and experience completely coincide. There is not a human being who has reached the period of moral agency of whom it cannot be confidently affirmed not only that he has sinned, but that he will still continue to sin. "There is no man," says Solomon, in his sublime prayer of dedication, "that sinneth not."[1] "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not."[2] "How should man be just with God? If he will contend with Him he cannot answer Him for one of a thousand."[3] The doctrines of repentance, pardon, justification by faith, the promises of daily strength—in fact, all the distinctive features of the Gospel—take for granted the absolute universality of human sin. The race is everywhere contemplated, both in the Old and New Testaments, as a race of sinners. When we encounter a human being, there is nothing in regard to him of which we are more certain than that he has often done what was wrong. And we should

First fact of experience, sin universal.

[1] 1 Kings viii. 46. [2] Eccles. vii. 20. [3] Job ix. 2, 3.

look upon the man who dealt with his fellows upon the supposition that any of them were free from sin and not liable to be seduced into it, as much more to be pitied for his weakness than commended for his charity. If now all have sinned, if every mouth must be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God, there must be some cause which is competent to explain this universal effect. The cause cannot be partial and accidental; as sin is not the peculiarity of a few individuals nor the preposterous fashion of single tribes or peoples, it can be explained by no cause which is not coextensive in its influence with the entire human race. An universal fact implies an universal cause. Phenomena which always accompany humanity are in some way grounded in its nature. From the universality of reason, conscience, intelligence and will we infer that they belong to the constitution of the species. Operations which can only be ascribed to these faculties, as causes, justify the inference that they exist as universally as the effects, and are inseparable from the conception of a human being. On the same principle there must be something in man, something which is not local and accidental, but something which cleaves to the very being of the species, that determines every individual to sin. It is only by an original tendency to evil, or an aptitude to sin lying at the root of the will, that we can solve the phenomenon. Let us suppose that every human being came into the world free from every irregular bias, that the will was exclusively determined to good, or, as Pelagians hold, indifferent to either alternative; and how does it happen among so many millions who have lived upon the earth, through so many ages and generations, in so many nations and empires, and under so many different forms of social and political life, that not one has ever yet been found of whom Behold, he is clean! could be said with justice?

2. Sin is not only universal, but the tendency to it, according to the confession of the race, is stronger than the tendency to good. Men have to be carefully educated to virtue;

vice requires no preparatory training. The solicitude of parents for their children, the precautions of every community against crime, the checks which every constitution has to frame against the abuse of power; our bars, bolts and dungeons, our racks, gibbets and all the paraphernalia of penal justice, are conclusive proofs that we look upon each other as beings not to be trusted, that the motives of virtue require to be propped by external supports, and that even when thus propped they are counteracted by the superior energy of evil. Every government is framed upon the supposition that men are disposed to crime, and even where the disposition has not been elicited, it is yet very likely to be acquired. Here, then, is a prevailing tendency to sin—a tendency which all laws acknowledge, and a tendency which, if it should be overlooked and not guarded against in any commonwealth, would soon bring that commonwealth to ruin.

Second fact, the stronger tendency is to sin.

3. To this may be added the experience of the most earnest and devoted men in the culture of moral excellence. They complain of the presence of sin in them as an indwelling power, manifesting its evil in sudden temptation or sly and surreptitious suggestions, or in crippling and unnerving the principle of good. They cannot concentrate their energies upon the holy and divine. Their souls are rendered sluggish, their moral forces are dissipated and scattered, and languor seizes upon their spiritual life. This mode of operation clearly reveals the habitual character of sin; it is evinced not to lie in single, isolated acts, but in a permanent, abiding disposition, a fixed habit of the soul.

Third fact, its indwelling power in the best men.

4. This conclusion is further confirmed by the early age at which sin makes its appearance in children. As soon as they begin to act, they begin to show that self-will and self-affirmation are as natural as thought and reflection—they begin to unfold in their narrow sphere those same tempers and dispositions which, carried over to mature life and transferred

Fourth fact, it begins to appear in earliest childhood.

to the relations of business and social intercourse, are branded as odious and disgusting vices. Particularly in children does the spirit of self-seeking very early develop itself in the form of self-justification, and make them impatient under rebukes, surly to their superiors, and prone to falsehood as an expedient for maintaining their reputation free from reproach. Augustin has signalized these perversities of his childhood; and those who can recall their own childish experience, or who have watched the development of character in other children, can be at no loss for arguments to dispel the common illusion concerning the innocence of childhood. It is true that there is a class of sins, the offspring of experience and of a larger knowledge of the world, from which it is free; it is also free from the corresponding virtues. It has not yet learned distrust and caution—it is marked by simplicity of faith and freedom from suspicion; but it is equally marked by the principle of self-affirmation, whether the character be gentle and mild or bold and impetuous. The type of sin, which the after-life will unfold, begins from the dawn of consciousness to unfold itself.

These facts to be explained only by the doctrine of original sin.

Now these facts are certainly extraordinary if there is no such thing as a law of sin in human nature. Every hypothesis but that of native depravity utterly breaks down in attempting to explain them. Sin is universal as a fact. It is found, without exception, in every human being who reaches the period of awakened consciousness. It is found in those who are striving to obey the law of virtue; it pervades their faculties and enfeebles their energies and relaxes their efforts. It is stronger in the race than the tendency to virtue; and society can only protect itself against it by the powerful support of penal laws. It begins to unfold its potency at the very dawn of consciousness, and is as truly present in the child as in the full-grown man. These are not hypotheses, but facts; they are matters of daily observation, and matters upon which the institutions of the world turn. Admit an original aptitude for sin, an original bias

to evil, and the phenomena are at once explained. Deny it, and, as Hume says of the Gospel, all is mystery, enigma, inexplicable mystery. It is beyond controversy that every man looks upon his neighbour as having that within him which has to be watched. Whatever he may think of his own virtue, he is not willing to venture very far upon the mere integrity of other men, apart from securities extraneous to the innate love of right.

Is there any middle ground of truth betwixt Pelagianism and the Reformed doctrine?

But a tendency to sin, as a fixed and abiding disposition, may be admitted to exist without ascribing to our nature that complete and hopeless moral desolation which the Reformers included in the notion of the privation of original righteousness and the corruption of the whole nature. The Pelagian doctrine[1] that sin is accidental to every individual, and that the uniformity of the effect does not involve the steady operation of a permanent cause, may be discarded without adopting the views concerning the degree and extent of depravity which characterize the Augustinian school. Sin may be recognized as a habit co-ordinate with other and opposite habits; it may be represented as a diseased condition, which weakens without suppressing, hinders without extinguishing, spiritual life. Though it

[1] [Apart from the Pelagian scheme, which really denies any fall at all, there are four hypotheses as to the extent of the injury that human nature has received. The *first* is that of some Papists, who represent original sin as merely the deprivation of supernatural endowments, leaving man in full and entire possession of all his natural gifts. Original righteousness was a supernatural furniture for a supernatural end. It constituted no part of man's nature, considered simply as human, and considered as destined to an earthly existence. All that is necessary to his temporal being he still possesses, and possesses without injury. With reference to a higher and nobler end, transcending the pure idea of his nature, he is wholly unfurnished. The *second* is that of the Sensationalists, who confine the mischief of sin to the insubordination of the lower appetites—the undue preponderance of sense over reason and conscience, of flesh over spirit. The *third* is that of the Semi-Pelagians, who admit the pervading influence of sin as extending to the whole soul. The *fourth* is that of the Reformers, which we have already signalized as maintaining the total corruption of the whole nature.]

cleaves to the nature, it only enfeebles, but does not disable it; makes it languid and sluggish in its desires after good, but does not destroy the truth and reality of holy aspirations. Something good still clings to the soul. There are still traces of its pristine beauty, impressions of its original glory. The spiritual and divine have not been wholly lost by the fall. One party has represented sin as seated in the sensational nature, and consisting in the undue strength of corporeal appetites and passions. The higher principles of action, the principles of reason and conscience, exist in their integrity, but they are unable to subdue and regulate the inordinate motions of sense. The flesh is stronger than the spirit. It is in this want of proportion between the lower and the higher, the want of proper adjustment, that sin essentially consists.

The Sensationalists.

Others admit that the disorder of sin extends to the whole soul, that the entire nature is brought under its influence; but that there still remains in man a point of attachment for Divine grace—an ability by which he can concur with or decline the influences of the Holy Ghost. He has points of sympathy with the good by virtue of which he is differenced from devils and made capable of redemption. They admit his bondage, but contend that there is that still left in man which causes him to abhor it, to sigh for deliverance from it, and to accept cheerfully the friendly hand that proffers to him assistance.

The Semi-Pelagians.

This natural ability is a very different thing from that which Arminians attribute to the race through grace. It belongs to man independently of the work of the Spirit, and is precisely that which conditions the result of that work. The Arminian admits that man since the fall has no natural ability to good, and ascribes to redeeming mercy that attitude of the will by virtue of which it is enabled to accept the offer of salvation. The ability is the same in kind, but different in its origin, from that maintained by those who contend for something still good amid

How these are differenced from Arminians.

the ruins of the apostasy. The question, therefore, which we have to discuss is, Whether the sinner, independently of grace, possesses any element that can be truly and properly called good? Whether any seeds of holiness are still deposited in his nature? Whether he is able in any sphere of cognition or of practice to compass the holy and divine? There are but two sources of proof: Scripture and experience—the word of God and the consciousness of those who have been renewed by the Holy Ghost.

Is there any good naturally in man?

If there be any spiritual good in man, it must manifest itself in the double form of spiritual perception and of holy love, as an act of cognition and an act of will. It is the characteristic of holiness that it holds in unity all the elements of our rational and moral being. We can separate logically betwixt thought and volition, betwixt the understanding and the heart, but in every holy exercise there is the indissoluble union of both. The perception of beauty and excellence cannot be disjoined from love. The peculiarity of the cognition is just the discernment of that element to which the soul immediately cleaves as the divine and good. Now if man independently of grace possesses any germ of holiness, he is able to some extent to perceive and appreciate the infinite excellence of God; he must in some degree love Him as the perfect good, and desire conformity with Him as the true perfection of the soul. Wherever there is no element of love to God as the good there is no real holiness. Wherever there is no sense of the glory of God as the supreme end of life there is nothing divine. Tried by this test—and it is the only test which is at all applicable to the case—every mouth must surely be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God. The testimony of Scripture is explicit, both as to man's inability to perceive the glory of God, and the total absence from his heart of anything answering to a genuine love. Every Scripture

If there be any good in man, he must both know and love God.

Scripture denies both respecting him.

which teaches that his understanding is blinded by sin, that his mind is darkness, that he needs a special illumination of the Spirit of God in order to be able to cognize Divine things, teaches most explicitly that in his natural condition he is destitute of the lowest germ of holiness. If he cannot see he surely cannot relish beauty. If he is incapable of apprehending the qualities which excite holy affections, he is surely incapable of possessing the emotions themselves. There is nothing in the unrenewed sinner corresponding to that union of all the higher faculties in one operation which is implied in every exercise of holiness. He neither knows God nor loves Him. Hence, all who have been renewed are conscious that they have been introduced into a new type of life. There is not the development of something that was in them before, dormant or suppressed, but all things have become in a most important sense new. Their faculties are moved by a principle of which they had previously experienced no trace, and a harmony and unity are imparted to them which make them like really new powers. It is useless to recount the numerous passages of Scripture which teach the natural blindness of men, the hardness of their hearts, the perverseness of their wills and their obstinate aversion to the Author of their being—useless to cite the manifold texts which describe man in his natural state as an enemy to God and a slave to his lusts, to Satan and the world. Their plain and obvious meaning would be admitted at once if there were not certain appearances of human nature which seem to be contradictory to the natural explanation, and which therefore demand a sense in harmony with themselves. If these appearances can be reconciled with the scheme of total depravity, then that scheme must be accepted as the one taught in Scripture.

The experience of all renewed men confirms the Scripture.

Among these appearances, the one on which most stress is laid is the exhibition of a character distinguished by high probity and scrupulous integrity among unrenewed men. There

The case of the unrenewed man of high moral character.

are those who make conscience of duty, who recognize the supreme authority of right, and who endeavour to regulate their lives by the principles of reason. These men are not to be put in the same category with abandoned knaves or heartless voluptuaries. They have something about them spiritual and divine; they are good men. Such was the young man who presented himself to the Saviour as an inquirer after life, and whom even Jesus is said to have loved. Here the real question is as to the root of this morality. If it can exist apart from the love of God, and apart from any spiritual perception of the beauty and excellence of holiness, it is no more a proof of Divine life than the loveliness of a corpse is a proof that the soul still lingers in it. It must be borne in mind that the fall has destroyed no one faculty of man. It has not touched the substance of the soul. That remains entire with all its endowments of intelligence, conscience and will. These faculties have all, too, their laws, which determine the mode and measure of their operation—principles which lie at their root and which condition the possibility of their exercise. Intelligence has its laws, which constitute the criteria of truth and falsehood, and without the silent influence of which no mental activity could be construed into knowledge. Conscience has its laws, which constitute the criteria of right and wrong, and without which the sense of duty or of good and ill desert would be wholly unintelligible. Taste has its laws, which constitute the criteria of beauty and deformity, without which æsthetic sentiments would be nothing but arbitrary and capricious emotions. These are all co-ordinate faculties, and each has a sphere that is peculiar to itself. Collectively, they constitute the rational, moral, accountable being. They point to three distinct spheres of thought and life—truth, virtue, beauty. Intelligence is the faculty of truth, conscience is the faculty of virtue, and taste is the faculty of beauty. They all have an essential unity in the unity of the human person. They are grounded in one and the same spiritual substance. It is obvious that

the mere possession of these faculties does not make a being holy, otherwise holiness could not be lost without the destruction of the characteristic elements of humanity. They exist in the fiend as really as in the saint. Neither, again, does every mode of exercising them determine anything as to the holiness of the agent. There may be a spontaneous exercise in which the ground of satisfaction is the congruity between the faculty and its object. Truth may be loved simply as that which is suited to evoke the peculiar activity which we term knowledge. Duty may be practiced, in obedience to the authority of conscience, to prevent schism and a sense of disharmony in the soul; each faculty may seek its object and delight in its object only from the natural correspondence betwixt them. When this is the spring of action and the ground of pleasure, there is nothing but a manifestation of the essential elements of humanity. There may be in this way much truth acquired, and duty as a demand of the nature may be steadily and consistently practiced, and in all this the man never rise above himself. He is acting out his own constitution, and the law of his agency is that it is his constitution. His cognitions of duty are really in this aspect upon a level with his cognitions of truth, and he himself is the centre of both. Given his present constitution, he might act and think as he does if there were no God to whom he is responsible. In order that the exercise of these faculties may be holy, there must be something more than the substantial unity of the person; they must be grounded in a common principle of love to God. As truth, beauty and goodness are one in Him, so they must be one in us by an unity of life. Truth must not only be apprehended as something suited to my faculties of cognition, but as something which reflects the glory of God, and be loved as a ray of His excellence; beauty must not only be admired as something suited to my taste, but as the radiance of Divine excellence, the harmony of the Divine perfections; and the good must not only be apprehended as a thing that ought to be, the

right and obligatory, but as the secret of the Divine life, the soul of the Divine blessedness. Where the heart is pervaded by holy love all these faculties move in unison and all derive their inspiration from God. Hence, in these various spheres, the cognitions of a holy and an unholy being are radically different; they look at the same objects, but they see them in a different light. One perceives only the relations to himself; the other perceives the marks and traces of God. One sees only the things; the other sees God in the things. To one the objective reality is all; to the other, the objective reality is only the dress in which Deity makes Himself visible. In one, each faculty has its own separate life grounded in its own laws; in the other, they all have a common life grounded in love to Him who is at once the true, the beautiful and the good. Hence, as there may be knowledge and taste without holiness, so there may also be virtue. Eminent conscientiousness may be joined with eminent ungodliness—a high sense of duty as the requirement of our own nature with an utter absence of any real sense of dependence upon God. The most splendid achievements, therefore, of unrenewed men are dead works—objectively good, but subjectively deficient in that which alone can entitle them to be considered as the expressions of a Divine life. That this reduction is true may be inferred from the fact that there is a tendency in all integrity which exists apart from the grace of God to generate a spirit of pride. The motives to right-doing are apt to crystallize around this principle as their central law. The great argument for virtue is the dignity of human nature; the life of virtue is self-respect, and the beauty and charm of virtue is the superiority which it impresses upon its votaries. This tendency is strikingly illustrated in the school of the Stoics. Their fundamental maxim was, Be true to yourselves; and the difference betwixt the genius of their philosophy and the philosophy of Christianity is, that in the one, man is com-

Eminent conscientiousness with eminent ungodliness.

The virtue of the Stoics.

pared to a palace in which the personal individual reigns as a king, and in the other, to a temple in which God manifests His presence and His glory. The virtue of one exalts the creature; the virtue of the other glorifies the Creator. The one burns incense to his own drag and sacrifices to his own net; the other lays all its tribute at the feet of Divine grace. The one, in short, is the virtue of pride, and the other is the virtue of humility. The difference betwixt holiness and morality is like the difference between the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems of the universe. One puts the earth in the centre and makes the heavenly bodies revolve around it; the other, the sun. One makes man supreme; the other, God. Without denying the reality of human virtue, or reducing to the same level of moral worthlessness all the gradations of human character, it is possible to maintain that independently of grace there is none that doeth good in a spiritual and divine sense, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Müller on Sin, criticised as concerning holiness and morality.

There is a passage in Müller's profound work upon the Christian Doctrine of Sin, in which, through inattention to the radical distinction betwixt holiness and morality, he has maintained a view of human nature apart from grace which cannot be reconciled with the teachings of Scripture or the facts of Christian experience. And as the whole strength of the argument against total depravity is condensed in his remarks, it may be well to expose their error.

"We have already," he says,[1] "directed our attention to the fact, that in general there are, even for the determined villain, still deeds of crime at which, if only for a passing moment, he shudderingly turns away when the temptation to the same presents itself to him. This is an unambiguous testimony that even such an one is still capable of aggrava-

[1] Vol. ii., p. 269, 271.

ting his state of moral villainousness. But where aggravation is still possible, there must also exist a remnant of some power of good to be overcome, however deeply buried under the ashes of an unbridled life of crime the sparks of the same may be smouldering. Neither shall we be able altogether to deny the deeply debased man, in general, the ability of delaying or of hastening the progress of his debasedness. The will, as the governing middle point of the inner life, does not, even in abandoned, obdurate debasedness of life, become entirely lost in its own complicate entanglement with sin, but there ever remains, so far as we are acquainted with human conditions, and in so far as the human has not yet passed over into diabolical evil, down in the very deep of the soul an unvanquished remnant of moral, self-determining power—an ability, if ever so limited, of self-decision between the moral requirement and the impulses of wicked lust. And if this must be admitted in the most degenerate phenomena of the natural condition, how much more shall we be required to do so with respect to its better forms! Human nature has been created by God so noble that it is not easily possible, even in its aggravated and deeply fallen state, entirely to destroy the traces of its origin which exhibit themselves in the power of the good." Further on man's natural condition is represented, in the words of Neander, as consisting of "two mutually conflicting principles—the principle of the Divine offspring, the God-alliance in the endowment of the God, and the therein grounded moral self-consciousness, the reaction of the religio-moral original nature of man; and the principle of sin, spirit and flesh—so, however, that the former principle is impeded in its development and efficiency, and therefore held captive. Man, in his natural condition, without the peace of reconciliation, is, just because this peace is the truth of his very life, not an essence which is compact, restful in itself, but one which is in itself disunited, disquiet and full of contradictions." "The highest activity, therefore, of the still existent power of the good in the human natural condition, is not to deter-

mine to produce from itself an activity corresponding to the Divine requirement—for that it is by no means able to do—but to drive man to the humble and self-surrendering attachment to the salvation of Jesus; and that which in itself is excellent becomes in the reality the very worst perversion when it self-sufficiently and perversely sets itself up over against the offered salvation."

This passage exhibits the whole of the philosophy in which the doctrine of the bondage of the will is sought to be reconciled with the active concurrence of man in the application of redemption. It endeavours to maintain, on the one hand, the hopeless ruin of the race apart from the grace of God, and to ground, on the other, the different reception of the Gospel on the part of men in the state of their own wills; it is an effort to teach depravity without efficacious grace—inability without predestination. It wishes to make man the immediate arbiter of his own destiny. The passage, therefore, deserves to be carefully considered.

Four distinctions betwixt holiness and morality.

1. In the first place, because there are degrees of wickedness, it is a singular confusion of ideas to infer that any can be good. One state may be worse than another without being less virtuous. One stage of degradation is certainly lower than another, but it does not follow that there is anything lofty in either. The development of wickedness is one thing, the presence of holiness is another; and the mere absence of certain measures or forms of wickedness is not the affirmation of any positive element of goodness. Müller has here evidently confounded that relative goodness which is only a less degree of badness with the really good—the non-presence of types of sin with the actual presence of a principle—of a germ—of holiness. We might as well say that because the recent corpse was less loathsome, it was therefore less dead than that which is rapidly sinking in decay and putrefaction.

2. In the next place, to represent the resistance which a man makes to his own conscience in every successive stage of sin as a struggle against the good which still exerts itself

within him, is to overlook the distinction betwixt the authority of conscience and the love of God. The conscience certainly remonstrates and enforces the right in the form of an absolute, unconditioned imperative—it threatens him with the destruction of his peace if he perseveres in his career; but the right comes to him as restraint, as force—as something against which the current of his soul is set. There is neither love to it, nor respect to the will of God as declared by it. There is no struggle of inclinations, of opposite loves, but there is a struggle of love and inclination against positive prohibition. To know duty and to be reluctant to perform it is no proof of goodness in the heart. On the contrary, as we have already seen, there may be a real satisfaction of duty as the demand of our own moral nature, without the slightest tincture of complacency in God or the slightest reference to the supreme end of our existence.

3. In the third place, the conflicts which take place in the breast of the natural man are not conflicts between the love of God and the inordinate desires and passions of a fallen nature. They are conflicts between conscience and his lusts; and the deepest mortification which he experiences under the sense of his degradation is the injury done to his pride. There is no penitence before God, and there is no shame for having brought reproach upon Him or for having come short of His glory.

4. In the last place, the disjointed, miserable condition to which the sinner finds himself reduced has no tendency to dispose his mind to a favourable reception of the Gospel. The representations, in which a class of writers is prone to indulge, of the heart of fallen man as conscious of its bondage and sighing for deliverance, looking out eagerly for some method of escape from the degradation and ruin of sin, are mere figures of the fancy unsustained by a solitary fact of experience. Man has struggles and conflicts, but they are struggles, not to escape from sin, but to escape from his own conscience and the law. His misery is that he cannot sin with impunity. His great effort, in the development of sin,

is to extinguish the sense of obligation; and the peace which he seeks is a peace which shall reconcile God to him and not him to God. There is nothing in the subjective condition of the sinner which renders redemption welcome to him; there is neither a longing for it before it comes, nor a joyful acceptance after it has been revealed. The Scriptures everywhere attribute to the grace of God those spiritual perceptions which present the Saviour to us as an object of faith and love, and enable us to appreciate the fullness and freeness of pardoning mercy. It is only the Divine Spirit who produces the hatred of sin as sin, and the desire to be liberated from it on account of its inherent vileness. There is nothing in man to which redemption attaches itself as sympathizing with its own distinctive provisions and predisposing the heart for its message; and it is proverbial that the very last to submit to its overtures are precisely those who have the greatest degree of that moral good which consists in conscientiousness and integrity. If mere morality is of a piece with holiness, it would seem that the more moral a man was, the readier he would be to accept the offers of salvation; but the language of our Saviour in relation to the Pharisees of His own generation holds in relation to the same class in all ages. Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before them.

In what sense, man capable of redemption.

But it may be asked, Is there not a capability of redemption? Is there nothing upon which the Gospel can seize that shall evoke an echo of the unrenewed heart to its doctrines and promises? The answer is, that there is no natural sympathy between them; but there is a deep and profound sympathy produced by the Divine Spirit when He awakens the consciousness of need. The consciousness of need is awakened through the impulse which He gives to the operations of conscience. He employs our natural faculties; through them He convinces of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and by His secret touch they are brought into the attitude in which they are prepared to listen to the joyful tidings of

salvation. We have the elements out of which a sympathy can be established, but that sympathy results entirely from the direction which the Holy Ghost impresses upon these elements. Left to themselves, they would everlastingly struggle in their blindness against God, holiness and heaven.

Heathenism shows the real tendencies of human nature.

The real tendencies of human nature left to itself are found in heathenism. If there is in man a sense of the holy, of the spiritual and divine, if there is a real and earnest longing for emancipation from the bondage of sin, we should expect to see it embodied in some of the forms of religious worship in which man has given utterance to the deepest and profoundest instincts of his soul. Do we find any such yearning in the ritual of heathenism? Is it the effort of a sinful creature to restore itself to God in the fellowship of holy love? Does it hold fast, while it confesses its own weakness and aberrations, to the infinite goodness and the adorable excellence of God? Is its language that He is glorious and deserves to be praised and loved, while we are vile and ungrateful in withholding the tribute that is due? So far from it, that no explanation can be given of its absurdities and monstrosities, its contradictions to reason and conscience, its violent perversions even of taste and decency, but that it is the determined effort of a moral being, cut loose from its Maker, to extinguish all right apprehensions of His name. It has utterly exploded the notion of holiness as an attribute either of God or man; it has outraged reason by creations that contradict the first principles of common sense; it has outraged conscience by putting the stamp of religion upon crimes and atrocities which one, it would seem, could never have dreamed of, if he had not been resolutely set on becoming as unnatural as it was possible; it has outraged taste by transferring to the sphere of worship all the forms of deformity, ugliness, hatefulness which it is possible for the human imagination to picture. If the problem had been to devise a scheme in which not a single element that belongs to the higher nature of man

should enter, in which all truth, all goodness and all beauty should be entirely and completely banished—a scheme in which it was proposed to reach the climax of contradiction to the noblest features of humanity—nothing more consonant to such a purpose could have been excogitated than the system of heathenism. It shows us what the human soul longs for, and while it reveals man's need of redemption it reveals at the same time the malignant opposition which it must expect to encounter.

The case summed up.

In every view of the case, therefore, whether we look at man in his wickedness or in his virtues, we are compelled to say that he is totally destitute of any holy love to his God. His is dead in trespasses and sins. He has an understanding which is able to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood, which can explore the mysteries of nature and reduce the manifold in her complicated phenomena to the unity of law; but in all the multitude of his discernments he cannot find the Father of his own soul, and the real source of all the truth that he appropriates in fragments. His knowledge misses the very life and soul of truth, and his science is but a dead form. He has a conscience which reveals to him the eternal distinctions of right and wrong and unveils the awful majesty of virtue. He recognizes the deep significance of law and duty, but he fails to ascend to the primal fountain of all rectitude, and is destitute of that Divine life in which the right is realized as the good, and law divested of all appearance of constraint in the sweet inspiration of loving obedience. He has a fancy which delights in forms of beauty, and he contemplates with intense rapture the starry heavens, the rolling earth, and all the types of loveliness and grandeur which are impressed upon the visible things of God; but that beauty which is above all, from which all have sprung, and to which all point as to their centre, his heart has never caught and his soul has never adored. Nay, without the most strenuous efforts his life in all these spheres is prone to ceaseless degradation. Having lost the

principle which gives them consistency, he is constantly prone to lose the things themselves. In everything that bears upon the true, the beautiful and the good, he evinces that there is a something within him which cripples and retards and perverts his efforts. Holiness is spiritual health and strength, and where that is gone the whole action of the soul is morbid. Hence, the liability to error, the influence of prejudice, the misapprehension of the true method and scope of philosophy, are confessions that man has fallen from his pristine purity. Depravity impedes all the natural exercises of our faculties; it is as much the secret of false philosophy as of false religion. It is the disease, the paralyzing touch of sin, that makes the memory treacherous, the imagination unchaste, the attention inconstant, the power of thought unsteady, reflection painful and arduous, association arbitrary, and the fancy the storehouse of fleeting and deceitful images of good. With a holy faith utterly gone—the true light of the spiritual firmament—man gropes his way in darkness, relieved by the glimmering of the few stars that stud his natural sky. Without God he cannot but be without health and peace. The creature mocks him; he mocks himself; he walks in a vain show, mistakes dreams for realities, and embraces a cloud for a divinity.

II. Having considered original sin, both in its nature as a habit and in its characteristics as the total destitution of all holiness and as a tendency or disposition to universal evil, I come now to treat of the mode of its transmission, in consequence of which it is styled *hereditary sin* or *hereditary guilt*. It is handed down from parent to child in the line of ordinary generation. Adam after his fall begat a son in his own moral likeness, and all his posterity have perpetuated to their descendants the character which began with him. That the notion of transmitted or hereditary sin is beset with difficulties which human speculation is unable to surmount, it were folly to deny. But these difficulties, it should be remembered, are not property of any peculiar

Hereditary guilt.

theory. All schemes are beset with them, and there is no method of escaping them but by plunging into the greater difficulties of denying facts which form a part and parcel of every human consciousness. We may deny that human nature is perverted from its normal development; that man is failing to realize the idea of his nature; or that there exists any special hindrance to the formation of a perfect character; but the conscience of every human being not totally dead to the truth and import of moral distinctions will remonstrate against such an abuse of speculation. Our wisdom is to look at the facts precisely as they are, to follow the explanations of the Scriptures as far as God has thought proper to resolve our perplexities, and what still lies unresolved to leave where we found it until we reach an elevation of greater light.

Two questions.

There are two questions with which we have to deal in treating of the hereditary character of original sin. The *first* question is how sin is propagated—how the child in the first moment of its existence becomes a participant of natural corruption, without making God the author of its impurity. The *second* question is, how that which is inherited, which comes to us from without as a conditioning cause and not a conditioned effect, can be strictly and properly regarded as sin—how, as it exists in us independently of any agency of ours, it can be contemplated with moral disapprobation or render us personally ill-deserving. The detailed examination of these two questions will lead us to a view of all the theories which have ever been proposed on this vexed subject; and if it should not answer all objections to the doctrine of the Reformed churches, it will at least show that this doctrine is less liable to exception than any other scheme.

Stapfer's theory.

1. In relation to the first question, one class of writers seem to regard it as a complete and satisfactory solution to say that like begets like. "The state of the parents," says Stapfer,[1] "is morally im-

[1] Vol. i., p. 234, chap. iii., §§ 851, 853.

perfect; of a state morally imperfect a perfect state can by no means be the consequence, for it is absolutely impossible that more should be in the effect than in the cause. It follows, therefore, that if the state of the parents is morally imperfect, that of the children must be so also, otherwise infants would be possessed of a perfection of which there is no natural cause." "As, therefore, the connection between the moral state of children and their parents is that of cause and effect, moral imperfection is propagated in the way of natural effect." According to this theory, the child is really the product of the parent—the parent the efficient cause of its existence. The parent expresses himself in the child, because the child is potentially included in him as a part of his own being. But in what sense is the parent the cause of the child? Does he produce by a conscious exercise of power and with a predetermined reference to the nature of the effect to be achieved? Can he fix the sex, bodily constitution or personal features of his offspring? Can he determine the bias or extent of the intellectual capacities? Has his will anything to do with the actual shaping and moulding of the peculiarities which attach to the fœtus? He is in no other sense a cause than as an act of his constitutes the occasion upon which processes of nature begin entirely independently of his will, and these forces or laws of nature are the immediate causes of the origin, growth and development of the child in the womb. He simply touches a spring which sets powers at work that he can neither control nor modify. He is only a link in a chain of instruments through which God calls into being; and the efficient power which gives rise to the effect is not in him, but in that great Being who holds all the forces of nature in His hands. It is, therefore, idle to say that the father makes the child, and can make him no better than he is himself—that he puts forth all his causal power, but as that is limited the results must bear the marks of the limitation. The relation of parents to children is not that of cause and effect; they are the instruments or conditions of the existence of

the offspring, but God may use an instrument to achieve results that very far transcend its own nature or capacities.

The other theories which we shall notice admit that the causal relation of the parent extends only to the body—that the soul is immediately created by God; and contend that as created by Him it is uncontaminated, and account for its subsequent defilement in one or the other of the following ways:

Pictet's theory.

Pictet[1] supposes that the mind of the mother during her pregnancy operates upon the mind of the child, and impresses the type of her own sinful thoughts; as the imagination of the mother very frequently marks the body of her offspring with representations of the objects that had strongly affected herself. From this account women still have a grievous burden to bear—they are not only the authors of the first sin that was ever committed, but they are the active instruments in the production of all the sin that still continues to afflict the world! They make every other human being corrupt as they seduced Adam from his innocence! But seriously, this theory is only a desperate resort. It was invented to save the consistency of speculative thought. And it cannot maintain itself without admitting that the soul is not created in its primitive condition; it admits weakness independently of the mother, and a weakness which renders corruption absolutely certain. How God is vindicated in this aspect of the case it is hard to understand.

The theory of Turrettin and Edwards.

The other explanation is that of Turrettin and Edwards, who contend that the soul is created spotless, yet it is destitute of original righteousness as a punishment of Adam's first sin; and accordingly they distinguish between a soul's being pure, so as the soul of Adam was when it was first created—that is to say, not only sinless, but having habits or inclinations in its nature which inclined it to what was good—and its being created with a propensity or inclination to evil . . .

[1] Pictet, vol. i., p. 446, seq.

and as a medium between both those extremes in which the truth lies, they observe that the soul is created by God destitute of original righteousness, unable to do what is truly good, and yet having no positive inclination or propensity in nature to what is evil.[1]

Upon this theory the notion of original guilt is supposed to involve no difficulty, but only the notion of original corruption. It is taken for granted that there is no contradiction to God's holiness in treating a being as a sinner who has never sinned, but there is a contradiction to His holiness in making him a sinner. But where is the difference? Suppose the being as coming from the hands of God is in fact spotless, how can he be treated as a sinner? If not treated as a sinner, then there is no guilt; and if no guilt, then no need of withholding original righteousness.

In the next place, to be destitute of original righteousness is sin. That a moral, rational and accountable being should exist without a disposition to love God and to reverence His holy law is itself to be in a positively unholy state. Want of conformity with the moral law is as truly sin as open and flagrant transgression. When these very men are arguing against the doctrine of the Papists, they insist upon the impossibility of an intermediate condition betwixt sin and holiness; and yet when they wish to explain the mode of propagation of sin, they distinguish between simple nature and the moral qualities which perfect and adorn it. I do not see, therefore, that this theory obviates any difficulty at all.

Suppose we should say that the principle of representation conditions the creation of the child in sin, that God gives him a being according to the determinations which the Covenant of Works requires, does that make God any more the author of sin than His daily and hourly conservation of sinners? If they are to be at all, they must be sinners, because they are guilty in their federal head—they exist in the Di-

[1] See Edwards on Original Sin, p. 330, seq.; also Turrettin, Loc. ix., Qu. 12, § 8, 9, as quoted in Ridgley, vol. ii., p. 131, upon Question xxvi.

vine mind as sinners. What contradiction, therefore, is there in realizing this decree of justice? I confess that to me the whole difficulty lies in what to these divines presents no difficulty at all—in the imputation of guilt. Grant that, and justice then demands, first, that men should exist, and secondly, that they should exist as sinners—that they should exist in an abnormal and perverted condition. Why should not God fulfil this requirement of justice? But it may be safest to treat the whole matter as an insoluble mystery. We know the fact that we are born into the world in a state of sin and misery; that we inherit from our parents a nature which is wholly destitute of original righteousness, and contains the ground of the most grievous departures from God—a nature which is absolutely unable to compass a single holy exercise. Whether our being is wholly derived from our parents, whether our souls are immediately created by God, whether defilement is consequent upon the union with the body, or the result of the generating act, or of the imagination of the mother, or of any other cause, it may be bootless to inquire. And on this subject the Reformed Church has settled nothing as the definite revelation of God.

The only difficulty lies with imputation.

2. The question which we have now to discuss is, how that moral condition in which we are born, and which has been propagated to us independently of our own wills, can be truly and properly regarded as sin; how that can be imputed to us as guilt which we have inherited as the constitution of our nature, and not determined by the free decision of our own personality. Guilt presupposes causation by the agent—that he is the author of the actions or of the dispositions for which he is held responsible. "In the notion of sin," as Müller[1] very justly observes, "lies only the objective, namely the existence of a fact, whether it be an act or condition contradictory to the Divine will; with the idea of guilt arises the subjective side, an author to whom it can be imputed." Hence,

The difficulty stated.

[1] Vol. i., p. 208.

as he had previously stated, "the first element in the notion of guilt is this, that the given sin must be ascribed to the man in whom it is, as to its author." The notion of causality as lying at the root of the notion of guilt he does not fail to notice as signalized by the Greek term for guilt, which has also the general signification of *cause*. It would seem, therefore, that where a given condition cannot be traced to him in whom it is found as its cause, where he receives it as a datum, and has neither directly nor indirectly procured it by his own agency, he cannot possibly be subject to the imputation of guilt. Objectively considered, the state in question may have all the qualitative features of sin, it may be materially the stain and the blot, but, subjectively considered, the man is rather a patient than an agent, rather suffers than does evil, and his condition accordingly is one of calamity and affliction, and not of sin. The difficulty is very pointedly put by Müller:[1] "Only a personal essence, and not a mere creature of nature, can render itself a subject of guilt. This arises from the fact that only a personal essence is able to be the real author of its actions and states, so that they may be imputed to it. Where there is no personality, consequently no freedom of the will whatever, there the power of an original self-determination is wanting; that which here appears as a self-determining, if traced into its true causes, resolves itself into a being determined. Accordingly, actions and states can only in so far be considered as criminal as they have their ultimate, deciding ground in the self-determination of the subject. If, on the contrary, the subject is in them merely the transition point for determinations which it receives from another power, whether it be a power of nature or a personal one, then these his states and activities are not his fault, unless that by some preceding self-determination he had rendered himself open to the power of such determining influence upon him. Now, the dogma of original sin teaches that the inrooted sinfulness, which according to the canon, *Semper cum malo originali simul*

[1] Vol. ii., p. 340.

sunt peccata actualia, necessarily produces all kinds of sin, is in us according to its universal, everywhere equal nature, solely as the consequence of the first sin of the parents of our race. But if this sinfulness is in us solely by the action of other individuals without our own aid, then it cannot be imputed to us as its authors, but only to those individuals; it is then in us not as guilt, but solely as evil and calamity. Moreover, in all the actual sins which arise out of this sinfulness, it is not strictly speaking we who act, but the first of mankind by us; but how then should our apparent action still be real sin on account of which we may become reprobated?"

Is hereditary depravity really sin?

Such is the difficulty. Perhaps the most satisfactory method of approaching the solution, will be, first, to inquire into the question of fact whether hereditary depravity is or is not really sin—that is, is or is not damnable in the sight of God. Does it make a man guilty of death?

The Papists are reluctant to condemn it as chargeable with guilt, especially as it manifests itself in the involuntary excitations of the regenerate. Its first motions in them they do not represent as sin, but only the encouragement which is given by the will to these irregular impulses. Bellarmin[1] indeed admits that concupiscence is non-conformity with the law, and sin, if these words be taken largely and improperly, as every vice and departure from rule and order, not only in manners, but also in nature and art, may be called sin. But in a strict and proper sense the determinations of sin cannot be applied to the yet unsanctified nature of those who have been renewed by baptism. "We assert," says he, "that corruption of nature or concupiscence, such as remains in the regenerate after baptism, is not original sin, not only because it is not imputed, but because it cannot be imputed, since it is not in its own nature sin." And the Council of Trent declares that it

Bellarmin's views.

[1] De Amiss. Grat., lib. v., cap. xiv. Controv., tom. iv., cap. vii. De Moor, cap. xv., § xxiii.

is, in the Scripture, called sin, not because it is sin, but because it springs from sin and leads to sin: *Ex peccato est et ad peccatum inclinat.* The Remonstrants in their Apology articulately maintain "that original sin is not to be considered sin in the sense that it renders the race unworthy of the Divine favour, or exposes them to punishment in the strict and proper sense, as contradistinguished from calamity; but it is to be viewed only as evil, infirmity, misfortune—it brings with it no guilt."

The Remonstrants.

Limborch.[1] one of the most learned of the Remonstant divines, repeatedly enounces the doctrine that what is natural cannot be sinful, and that the imbecility under which the posterity of Adam labours, and which, he thinks, has been grievously exaggerated by the Reformed theologians, cannot be properly associated with the notion of guilt. He admits that human nature has been injured by the fall; that we are born with appetites less pure than those of our first parents; that there is a stronger inclination to evil, in consequence of which we are seduced into sin with less provocation; but still he maintains that this concupiscence, in as far as it is natural, and not a habitude contracted by our own voluntary acts, cannot be properly denominated sin. The fundamental position of the Arminian school, that ability is the measure of duty, necessitates this conclusion. Whatever has not freely originated from ourselves cannot be imputed to ourselves; it is not ours, but must be attributed to the cause which really determined it.

Limborch.

Zwingle.[2] too, however it has been attempted to explain away its obvious import, conveys the same idea. He styles original sin as a disease, and not as strictly and properly sin.

Zwingle.

The Reformed divines.

On the other hand, the Reformed divines have uniformly maintained that the depraved condition in which all the descendants of Adam are born is not only the fruitful parent of sin, but is in its own nature sin, and makes the man truly guilty before God. It

[1] Limborch, lib. iii., c. 3, § 4. [2] De Moor, cap. xv., § xxiii.

is itself damnable in its being, motions and results, and without any actual transgression is a just ground of exclusion from the favour of God. This conclusion is equally sustained by the testimony of Scripture and the authority of conscience. It is admitted by Bellarmin and the Council of Trent that the word of God pronounces it to be sin. The whole argument in the seventh chapter of Romans proceeds upon the supposition not only that it is evil, calamity, misfortune, but that it is guilt; that it makes a man damnable—the subject of the righteous retribution of death. The declaration of Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, that we are by nature the children of wrath, can by no possibility be evaded. We are there expressly said to be under the condemnation of God, on account of the condition in which we are born. David, too, aggravates the guilt of his actual sin, in the fifty-first Psalm, by tracing it back to the sinful principles which he inherited from his mother's womb. The whole treatment of our natural condition in the New Testament is grounded in the notion that it is a state of guilt; that our imbecility is blameworthy; and that it has to be dealt with not as disease, but as moral perversion and disorder. All the provisions of grace imply this, or are utterly unintelligible.

Testimony of the Scriptures.

Then, again, if the Scripture definitions of sin are to be maintained, they cannot but include our native corruption. It surely is want of conformity with the law. It is the very defect which the law stigmatizes as the form of sin. Wherever there is not conformity, there is and must be sin in a subject capable of obedience. The man who is not what he ought to be, or who is what he ought not to be, the Bible uniformly treats as a sinner, and takes for granted that in some way or other the blame must be ultimately visited upon himself. It knows nothing of a non-conformity which is innocent. It assumes that the fact must always be grounded in guilt.

Argument from Scripture definitions of sin.

In the third place, if original corruption were not sin, it

would be difficult to explain how the acts to which it excites, and which are only the outward expressions of itself, could be considered sinful. If the original impulse is innocent, how can its gratification be sin? How can its motions and excitations undergo a change in their own nature in consequence of their being humoured or encouraged? There is surely no harm in yielding to the suggestions of innocent impulses. The Saviour teaches us to judge of the tree by its fruits. When the fruits are good, the tree is good. The Arminian tells us that all trees are in themselves good, but that some are unfortunately afflicted with evil fruits; yet that the evil is only in the fruit.

A third argument from Scripture.

In the last place, original sin is certainly visited with death, and if death be the exponent of guilt, then original sin must make its subject guilty.

A fourth argument from Scripture.

Our own consciences are equally explicit with the Scriptures. They condemn the dispositions and habitudes which are grounded in our nature as the very core of the sinfulness which appears in our life. It is the malice, the hardness of heart, the insensibility, the unbelief, which cleave to us as the legacy of birth, which constitute the very life of our wickedness. The disposition or principle determines the moral significancy of the act; the state of mind which lies at the root of the will conditions the degree of guilt which attaches to the act. The awakened sinner is particularly struck with the appalling wickedness involved in the fixed, abiding condition of his soul. His attention may first be arrested by his transient acts, but under the guidance of the Spirit he is soon led to inspect the moral attitude of his heart, and to pronounce the sentence of the prophet, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Conscience condemns us, then, for what we are no less unequivocally than for what we do. We cannot, therefore, evade the conclusion that native corruption is sin; that it

Testimony of our own conscience.

carries with it exposure to the Divine condemnation; that it ends in death. Scripture and conscience cannot tolerate the palliatives of a deceitful philosophy; they know nothing of a heart destitute of love to God as only unfortunate and not criminal, and they never deal with unbelief as infirmity, but not guilt. Both, in directing us to look at our nature, stop our mouths and compel us to acknowledge that we deserve to die.

These testimonies prove that original sin involves guilt.

It is an important point to have clearly settled in the mind that original sin is accompanied with ill desert. It establishes beyond the possibility of doubt that in some way or other we must be the responsible authors of it. Conscience in condemning us as guilty on account of it, and the Word of God in ratifying that sentence, pronounce us at the same time to be the voluntary cause of its existence. Otherwise there would be a palpable contradiction. Even if it were granted that we are utterly unable to detect the causal relation, if it eludes our closest scrutiny, if the result of all philosophical inquiry gives only the appearance of our being absolutely conditioned by a foreign agency,—still, we should not be authorized to contradict a fundamental deliverance of conscience on account of our inability to apprehend the grounds of its truth. It must be assumed as unquestionable, whether we can explain it or not. Its voice is final, whether we can understand the reason of its verdict or not. If conscience says that we are guilty on account of our native turpitude, that is a declaration that we stand in a personal relation to it which makes it justly imputable to us as our fault. We have in some way or other procured it. Now the question arises, How and when? It is perfectly clear that if it must be ascribed to us, it must either be in consequence of some voluntary act of ours or in consequence of the voluntary act of another that can be justly construed as ours. A sinful state can only spring from a sinful act. It is always the penal visitation of transgression. Original

In what way was it procured?

sin, therefore, as a permanent, abiding condition must be penal, as Augustin and the Reformers persistently assert, or it cannot be sin at all. The sinful act which produced it must have been the personal decision of each human will—that is, each man must have fallen by his own personal transgression—or it must be the act of another so related to us as that we may be held accountable for it. There is no third supposition possible—no medium betwixt our own act and the act of another.

Only two suppositions possible.

Shall we say, then, that each man fell for himself? That would necessitate the notion of a state of existence prior to our birth in this world; of an ante-mundane probation in which we failed, and the consequence of which is the disordered condition in which we find ourselves beginning our earthly life. There have been intrepid logicians who have resolutely followed up the datum of conscience in relation to the guilt of original sin, and have found in it the unqualified assertion that we lived, moved and willed before we were born. The reasoning is short and apparently decisive. Our nature is sinful; it could not have been made so without our act; that act which corrupted the nature could not have taken place in time, for the corruption begins with our life in time; there must, therefore, have been a transcendent existence in which this indispensable prerequisite of original sin was realized.

Ante-mundane probation.

There are many phenomena connected with our present mundane life which the deepest thinkers have felt themselves unable to comprehend without the supposition of a pre-existent state. Pythagoras, it is well known, looked upon the present as a penal condition to which we were degraded for our abuse of a higher and nobler state. Plato felt himself equally at a loss to explain the phenomena of knowledge or of sin without the same presuppo-

Pythagoras.

Plato.

sition. Origen could find satisfaction in dealing with the deliverances of the human conscience, and the explicit testimonies of Scripture, only by adopting the same hypothesis. "Kant, despairing of finding liberty anywhere in the iron chain of motive and action as stretching from the beginning to the end of our empirical existence, sought it in the higher world of the unconditioned; and Schelling, as early as 1809, in his celebrated essay on Freedom, in which he traced sin to a principle of darkness existing in God, and uniting itself with the free-will of man, expressly declared that original sin was committed by every man before his temporal being, and drew all the sins of life after it with rigorous necessity. Life was bound, but it was bound by an antecedent act of liberty, and thus the intuitions of conscience were defended by a bulwark too high for the reach of skepticism, and free-will stood invincible with its back to the wall of eternity."[1] Müller, in his great work on Sin, finds himself driven by the exigencies of consistent speculation to a timeless state in which each man by his own free act conditioned his moral development in time.

Origen.

Kant.

Schelling.

Müller.

But there are insuperable objections to such a scheme. In the first place, the notion of a timeless existence is itself utterly unintelligible. Every finite being is conditioned, and conditioned both by time and space, and an intelligible world of real substantive existences without temporal relations is altogether contradictory.

Two insuperable objections to this notion.

In the next place, it is wholly unaccountable how such a state, signalized by so momentous an act as that which produced original depravity, has so entirely passed from the memory as to leave no trace behind. Surely, if anything had impressed itself upon our minds, such a condition, so different from the present and so fruitful in its consequences, could not have failed to be remembered. If there had been

[1] North British Rev., 1850.

such a state, the Scriptures would not only have recognized it, but pressed it upon us as a full vindication of the justice of God in His dealings with the race. The recollection of this primitive act of freedom would have silenced all cavils, stopped every mouth, and explained to every human soul how and when it became the author of its own ruin.

Totally inconsistent with Scripture.

But the doctrine is palpably inconsistent with the Scripture account concerning the origin of the human species, and the moral condition in which the first of the race began his mundane being. We must look for that act which entails our depravity in the sphere of time and in the sphere of temporal conditions. We cannot carry human existence beyond Adam, nor Adam's existence beyond that creative fiat which gave him his being on the sixth day. Then and there the species began and began holy. The Scriptures further inform us when and where and how he lost his integrity. From the time of his disobedience in the garden in eating the forbidden fruit he and all the race have borne the type of sin. There has been no holiness in the species from that hour to this unless as supernaturally produced by the grace of God. It would seem, therefore, that the all-conditioning act which has shaped the moral impress of the race was no other than the act which lost to Adam the image of his God. And such seems to be the explicit testimony of Scripture: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Either we are guilty of that act, therefore, or original corruption in us is simply misfortune and not sin. In some way or other it is ours, justly imputable to us, or we are not and cannot be born the children of wrath. We must contradict every Scripture text and every Scripture doctrine which makes hereditary impurity hateful to God and punishable in His sight, or we must maintain that we sinned in Adam in his first transgression. There human sin historically began. Before that time the species was holy; since that time there has been none that doeth good, no, not one. That, therefore, is the decisive act—that was

the point on which the destinies of the race turned. But the question arises, How could that act have been ours in such a sense as to justify the imputation of guilt? What causal agency could we possibly have had in bringing it about? Was Adam ourselves, or were ourselves Adam, or could we and he be personally one? Let us look at our relation to him, and see if we can find anything in which to ground the notion of our participating in the guilt of his transgression.

Our relation to Adam as a ground for imputation.

In the first place, he was the natural head of his posterity—the father of all mankind. But the act of a parent is not by any means the act of the child. If the parental relation, such as it now obtains in the species, exhausted Adam's relations to the race, it would be impossible to explain how they could be guilty on account of his sin, or why they should be guilty on account of the first sin rather than any other. Even if it were granted that as a father he must propagate his own moral features, his children would receive them simply as a nature, without being blamable on account of them, as a child might innocently inherit a distorted body which the parent had brought upon himself by guilt. The natural relation is, therefore, wholly incompetent to bear the load of hereditary sin. There must be something more than parent and child in the case. It is vain to appeal to those analogies in which the offspring share in the sufferings incurred by the wickedness of their fathers. The offspring indeed suffer, but they do not charge themselves with blame—they have no sense of ill desert. They look upon their sufferings distinctly as calamities, and not as punishments to them, though they may be punishments of their fathers through them.

Adam our natural head.

In the next place, Adam was the federal head or representative of his race. He was on probation for them, as well as for himself, in the Covenant of Works. He was not a private individual—he was the type of universal humanity. In

Adam our federal head.

him God was dealing with all who should afterward spring from his loins. Now, that he sustained this relation is clear from the explicit testimony of the Scriptures; and that it, if justly founded, is adequate to solve the problem of hereditary guilt, is beyond dispute. If Adam were the agent of us all, his act was legally and morally ours. *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.*

Is this founded in justice?

The only question is, Whether this federal relation is founded in justice? We have already seen that the principle is one of benevolence, and furnishes the only hope for the absolute safety of any portion of mankind. Without this principle, the whole race might have perished without the possibility of redemption. But its benevolent tendencies are no proof of its essential justice. Can we vindicate it upon principles of reason? Is there any such union in the nature of things betwixt Adam and his descendants as to justify a constitution in which he and they are judicially treated as one? An affirmative answer has been given on two grounds: 1. That of generic unity; and 2. That of a Divine constitution.

Two grounds.

The ground of a fundamental unity.

If a fundamental unity subsisted betwixt Adam and his species, it is clear that he could be justly dealt with as the federal head or representative of the race. He was the race, and therefore could fairly be treated as the race. What he did, it did; his act was the act of Mankind, and his fall was the fall of Man. There was no fiction of law; there was no arbitrary arrangement when he was made the representative of all who were to descend from him by ordinary generation. There was a real and an adequate foundation in nature for that covenant under which he was put upon trial, not only for himself, but for all his posterity.

Relation of the federal to the natural unity.

Here, too, we see the precise relation of the federal and natural union betwixt Adam and the race. The federal presupposes the natural. The federal is the public recognition of the fact

implied in the natural, and is a scheme or dispensation of religion founded upon it. If there were not a real unity betwixt Adam and the race, the covenant of works could not, by an arbitrary constitution, treat them as one. In the notion of a generic identity of human nature, both ideas blend into one. Adam's sin becomes imputable, and as guilt in him becomes the parent of depravity in them. Hence, in the order of thought, his sin must always be conceived as imputed before *they* can be conceived as depraved. They must be regarded as guilty before they can reap the penal consequence of guilt.

The testimony of conscience harmonized.

By this doctrine of imputation the testimony of conscience is completely harmonized. It makes us recognize our depravity as the result of our own voluntary act; it was our voluntary act in the sense in which Adam and we were one. It makes us pronounce ourselves guilty on account of the corruption of our nature, and to the extent of our participation in the generic character of the race we are blameworthy. We are responsible for this as we are responsible for every habit contracted by our own voluntary acts.

The only point in which this explanation fails to give satisfaction is in relation to the question whether the notion of generic unity is an adequate basis for grounding a personal participation in the sin of Adam. In consequence of this difficulty, one class of theologians has recoiled from the doctrine of the immediate imputation of Adam's first sin, and resolved the guilt of native depravity into our subsequent concurrence in it. That is, it becomes sin in us only by our free consent to its impulses—we make it sin by endorsing it. But if it be given to us as a part of our constitution without any fault justly chargeable upon us, it is hard to understand how a life spontaneously manifesting itself in conformity with existing conditions can be criminal in man any more than in the brute, unless the whole of his moral probation be summed up in the duty of resisting his nature. If sin only then

Imputation not mediate, but immediate,

begins when his will has adopted the suggestions of corrupt lust, then it is implied that not only up to that point he is innocent, but that he is fully competent to mortify the flesh and extirpate his depravity. If he has not the power to resist and subdue, if his will is mastered by his nature, it is clear that the same reasoning which exempted native corruption from the imputation of guilt, must also exempt all the acts necessitated by it. To maintain a will stronger than depravity is contrary to the whole teaching of Scripture concerning the extent and degree of that depravity, and is also inconsistent with the doctrine of the necessity of redemption. Unless therefore we begin with guilt, we can never end with guilt. Either Adam's sin must be imputed, or all his race must be pronounced free from aught that is blameworthy or deadly. Hence, the Scriptures teach explicitly that we are first charged with the guilt of Adam's sin, and then, as the legal consequence, are born with natures totally corrupt.

according to the Scriptures.

The matter may be put in another light. The disobedience of Adam was, unquestionably, the beginning of sin in the race. That disobedience determined the moral habitude or condition of his own soul, and determined it by a judicial sentence. He lost the image of God because he was guilty. The whole human race are born destitute of that image. Now, their destitution is beyond doubt the consequence of his sin. In what way or on what principle the consequence? There are but two possible suppositions: a consequence either implying or not implying blameworthiness in them —a mere process of nature or a decree of justice. If a mere process of nature, then their existence absolutely begins with their birth, and the state in which they find themselves is an appointment of God analogous to that which determines the qualities of a tree or the propensities of a beast. They are just what God made them. But it can be no sin to receive a nature which you cannot determine. If now the nature conditions the life, there can be no sin in that life in

Another statement of the case.

as far as it answers to the nature. If, on the other hand, our depravity is the judicial consequence of the first transgression, then it supposes not only that we existed, but that we acted, in Adam; and then we have a point for all the subsequent determinations of guilt. The nature is wicked in me on the same principle that it was wicked in Adam—it was contracted by a wicked act.

Still another statement.

Others are content with the general statement of Adam's natural and federal relations to the race, without attempting to explain how the one is grounded in and justified by the other. They are willing to admit that the existence of every individual begins at the moment of his personal manifestation in time. But they contend that the judicial sentence of the covenant conditions the type of that manifestation, and necessitates the appearance of every descendant of Adam as a sinner. If asked, Whether representation can be arbitrary? they answer, No; there must be a bond between the head and the members. If asked, What is the tie between Adam and his race? they answer, That of blood. His natural headship fits and qualifies him for federal headship. This theory, in avoiding the metaphysics of personal unity, and resolving the whole connection into a moral and political community founded in blood, has some advantages. It is justified by many analogies—by the present constitution of families, commonwealths and states—and avoids the difficulty growing out of the limitation of Adam's influence upon us as to his first sin. But it has also serious drawbacks. It does not explain the sense of guilt as connected with depravity of nature—how the feeling of ill desert can arise in relation to a state of mind of which the subjects have been only passive recipients. The child does not reproach himself for the afflictions which his father's follies have brought upon him; and the subject does not feel that he is punished in the calamities which a wicked ruler brings upon a nation. He makes a marked distinction between those ills which he experiences in consequence of his social and political connec-

tions with others, and those which he experiences in consequence of his own fault. Our inborn corruption we do feel to be our fault—it is our crime as well as our shame. Besides, this theory fails to explain the necessity of spiritual death. It does not show why God, in justice, must renounce the communion of those who are still personally innocent while putatively guilty. He might visit them with evil as a magistrate, and still treat them with sympathy and love in their personal characters. They might suffer without becoming depraved. If they are not in themselves the proper objects of odium, why should they be hated? These are difficulties connected with the account which recognizes no deeper unity than the natural and political. This theory, however, is the one commonly accepted in this country. Its simplicity recommends it. But I confess the leaning of my own mind to some theory which shall carry back our existence to the period of Adam's probation.

Generic unity the true basis.

On these grounds I am free to confess that I cannot escape from the doctrine, however mysterious, of a generic unity in man as the true basis of the representative economy in the covenant of works. The human race is not an aggregate of separate and independent atoms, but constitutes an organic whole, with a common life springing from a common ground. There is an unity in the whole species; there is a point in which all the individuals meet, and through which they are all modified and conditioned. Society exerts even a more powerful influence upon the individual than the individual upon society, and every community impresses its own peculiar type upon the individuals who are born into it. This is the secret of the peculiarities of national character. There was one type among the Greeks, another among the Asiatics, and still another among the Romans. The Englishman is easily distinguished from the Frenchman, the Chinese from the European, and the Negro from all. In the same way there is a type of life common to the entire race in which a deeper ground of unity is recognized than

that which attaches to national associations or the narrower ties of kindred and blood. There is in man what we may call a common nature. That common nature is not a mere generalization of logic, but a substantive reality. It is the ground of all individual existence, and conditions the type of its development. The parental relation expresses, but does not constitute it—propagates, but does not create it. In birth there is the manifestation of the individual from a nature-basis which existed before. Birth consequently does not absolutely begin, but only individualizes humanity. As, then, descent from Adam is the exponent of a potential existence in him, as it is the revelation of a fact in relation to the nature which is individualized in a given case, it constitutes lawful and just ground for federal representation. God can deal with the natural as a covenant head, because the natural relation proceeds upon an union which justifies the moral.

The ground of an arbitrary constitution.

The second explanation is that of Edwards, who endeavours to reduce all identity to an arbitrary constitution of God, and finds the same ultimate ground of the personal unity of Adam and the race as for the personal identity of the same individual in different periods of his existence, or the continued identity of the same substance in the successive changes of its being. This doctrine is unquestionably a paradox, and, however ingeniously put, sets at defiance the plainest intuitions of intelligence.

But it may be asked, Do you mean to say that each individual will actually expressed itself in the prevarication of Adam—that each man actually ate of the forbidden fruit? As individuals certainly not; as individuals none of us then existed. In our separate and distinct capacity his sin was no more ours than our sins are his. But as the race, which was then realized in him as it is now realized in all its individuals, his act was ours. How the individual is related to the genus, how the genus contains it, and how the individual is evolved from it, are questions which I am utterly unable to solve. But their mystery is no prejudice to their

truth. Our moral convictions demand that we should predicate such an unity of mankind; and though a great mystery itself, it serves to clear up other mysteries which are pitch darkness without it.

Mystery, no prejudice to truth.

If this account of the representative principle should be rejected, we can only fall back upon the testimony of Scripture, and treat it as an ultimate fact in the moral government of God until a satisfactory explanation can be given. We must accept it as we accept other first principles, and patiently wait until the difficulties connected with it are dissipated by further light. It does explain hereditary sin and hereditary guilt; it does unlock the mystery of God's dealing with the race; it does meet all the requirements of conscience in reference to our own moral state and condition. All that it leaves unsolved is the ground of its own righteousness. Every other theory is obliged to deny native depravity, and to contradict at once the explicit teachings of Scripture and the articulate enunciations of conscience.

The theory of representation alone consists with Scripture and with conscience.

LECTURE XIV.

THE STATE AND NATURE OF SIN.

WE have now traced the history of man, and of God's dealings with him, from Creation to the Fall. We have seen him in his primitive innocence when he walked in the light of his Creator's countenance, was regaled with the beauties of nature, received the homage of the creatures, and exulted in the prospect of a blessed immortality. He was at once a king and a priest—a king to whom the garden was a palace, and who exercised undisputed dominion over every lower rank of sublunary being—a priest in the great temple of nature, who gathered first from the fullness of his own heart, and then from the various perfections of the creatures, the manifold praises of God and poured them forth in doxology and adoration into the ears of the Eternal. He occupied a noble elevation. He had a grand destiny before him. But how

> "Little knows
> Any, but God alone, to value right
> The good before him, but perverts best things
> To worst abuse or to their meanest use!"[1]

The scene becomes woefully changed, and instead of truth, justice, innocence and sanctitude severe, we are presented with the brood of ills that have sprung from the pregnant womb of sin. We must now survey the race amid the ruins of the fall, and we must never lose sight of the consideration that the condition in which we now find ourselves is one of condemnation and of guilt. The frowning aspect of Provi-

[1] Par. Lost, iv., l. 201–204.

dence which so often darkens our world and appals our minds, receives its only adequate solution in the fact that the fall has fearfully changed the relations of God and the creature. We are manifestly treated as criminals under guard. We are dealt with as guilty, faithless, suspected beings that cannot be trusted for a moment. Our earth has been turned into a prison, and sentinels are posted around us to awe, rebuke and check us. Still, there are traces of our ancient grandeur; there is so much consideration shown to us as to justify the impression that these prisoners were once kings, and that this dungeon was once a palace. To one unacquainted with the history of our race the dealings of Providence in regard to us must appear inexplicably mysterious. The whole subject is covered with light when the doctrine of the Fall is understood. The gravest theological errors with respect alike to the character of God and the character of man have arisen from the monstrous hypothesis that our present is our primitive condition, that we are now what God originally made us, and that the exactions of his law have always been addressed to the circumstances of disadvantage and imbecility which now unquestionably attach to us. This were surely to cast a grave imputation upon the Judge of all the earth; and so strongly has the injustice of such an administration been felt that others have not scrupled to modify the principles of the Divine government so as to make them square with the imperfect condition of the species. It cannot be denied that if the present be assumed as our natural state, it is impossible to vindicate God's justice if he condemn us for that which He Himself of His own sovereign will implanted in us, and equally impossible to vindicate His holiness in implanting sin within us, or in not punishing it when He finds it there. Most of the errors touching human ability have arisen from inattention to the relations in which the fall has placed us to God. The whole doctrine of redemption is conditioned upon these relations, and we

State of sin.

Theological importance of the doctrine of the Fall of Man.

can therefore neither know ourselves, nor God, nor the Redeemer, without the knowledge of the moral features of our present state. It is represented in the Scriptures as a state of sin and misery, and our own experience abundantly justifies the melancholy record. But if we would compass in any just measure the magnitude of our ruin, we must inquire into the nature of sin, and see whence it derives its malignity and bitterness; we must then survey the extent to which we are involved in sin, and trace the steps by which we have sunk to this degree of degradation; we must finally vindicate the justice and goodness of God in His dispensations toward us, and when we have taken this wide survey, we may return prepared to appreciate the blessings of the Gospel.

What is sin?

I. The first point to be considered is the nature of sin, or the answer to the question, What is sin? The first and most obvious determination of it, and that to which the mind instantly reverts, is its relation to the moral law. Where there is no law, the Apostle assures us there can be no transgression. The moral law is the standard, or measure, by which the man must be tried. It prescribes alike what he is required to be and what he is required to do. It extends to the whole sphere of his voluntary being. It is the mould into which his whole life must be run. Whatever, therefore, in him is not in accordance with the law is sin. Hence, sin is described by John as being essentially *ἀνομία*—a state of non-conformity with the law. It is a matter of no consequence how the law is made known, whether through the operations of conscience or an express revelation from God; its authority does not depend upon the mode of announcing it, but upon its inherent nature as the standard and measure of moral rectitude. No matter how proclaimed, the soul of man instantly responds to it as holy and just and good. He feels that it speaks with authority, and that perfection neither in being nor condition

First: Objective determinations.

It is the transgression of the moral law.

can be attained to apart from its requisitions. When the question is asked, What does the law demand? some have sought to restrict it to external actions, others have confined it to chosen and deliberate purposes, but it is generally maintained that its domain is coextensive with the domain of the will. That it is not to be limited to external acts is evident from all those testimonies of Scripture which affirm it to be spiritual, and from the universal conscience of the race, which condemns the motive even more severely than the act, and conditions the morality of the agent more by his purposes than his actual doings. When, however, the obligation of the law is said to be measured by the extent of the will, the statement is not to be accepted without an explanation. If by *will* is meant only the conscious volitions, or the conscious preferences of the man, the statement is quite too narrow. Those states or habitual dispositions from which these conscious preferences proceed, those permanent conditions of the mind which determine and shape every motive and every act of choice, are as truly within the jurisdiction of the law as the volitions themselves. There is a something which we ought to be as well as a something which we ought to do. The law is as much the rule of our being as of our life. If it should be asked how we can become responsible for original habits and dispositions which exist prior to any exercise of will, and condition and determine all its choices, we must either resolve the thing into a primitive and inexplicable deliverance of our moral nature, or presuppose that, in our primitive state, these constitutional peculiarities are the result of an act of will. Man was made without any tendencies to evil; these he has superinduced upon himself by voluntary transaction, and they are, therefore, related to the will as its proper product. This is evidently the case in relation to acquired habits; they spring, in the first instance, from the will, and afterwards master it. So the whole inheritance of native depravity which we bring with us into the world, with all those tendencies to evil which hold the will in bondage, are the fruits of a free act

of choice. But whatever may be the explanation, Scripture and experience concur in attributing a moral significancy to the dispositions which, in our present state, lie back of the will. The malice which prompts to murder is as hateful as the murderous deed; the propensity which kindles at temptation is something more than a weakness—it is a positive evil.

If now the law regulates the being and the life of man, it is clear that our first determination of sin, taken from its relation to the law, extends its sphere to the inward condition as well as the outward expression of the soul—to the state of the heart as well as to the actions of the life. Whatever is not in exact accordance with the spirit and temper of the law, whatever is out of harmony with it, either in the way of defect, omission or overt transgression, is of the formal nature of sin.

It is disobedience to God.

But sin is not distinguished from a crime, or an immorality, or a vice, by this determination. We must add another element before non-conformity with the law is entitled to be called *sin*. That term indicates a special relation to God—nothing is sin which does not directly or indirectly terminate in Him. Hence, the law must be considered as the expression of His will, and then our determination by the external standard or measure is complete, and sin, as transgression of the law, becomes disobedience to God. It is the want of correspondence betwixt His will and ours. But when we have reached this point, do we feel that our inquiries are satisfied? Is it enough to say that such is the will of God, or such is the law, to satisfy the demands of our moral nature? Must we not go further, and inquire into the grounds of that will? Is it arbitrary, capricious, and can moral distinctions be created by a simple act of the Divine will considered without reference to any ulterior ground or motive? As moral character in man depends upon dispositions and principles back of his volitions, must there not be something analogous in God, something in the very nature and grounds of

His being which determines His will to command and forbid what it does? Unquestionably there is; it is the holiness of the Divine nature, that essential rectitude of His being, which constitutes His glory and without which we could not conceive Him to be an object of worship or reverential trust. Holiness is represented in the Scriptures as the very life of God. In all other beings it is an accident separable from the essence; in God it is His very self. It pervades all His other attributes and perfections, and makes them to be pre-eminently divine. His infinite knowledge, tempered by his holiness, becomes wisdom. His infinite power, wielded by this same holiness, becomes the guardian of justice, truth and innocence. His infinite will, impregnated with holiness, becomes the perfect standard of righteousness and duty. This perfection is God's crown and glory, and hence sin appears as the contrast to God's holiness and the coming short of God's glory. It is not simply transgression, disobedience; it is the want of holiness. These are all Scripture determinations. They are derived from the comparison of man's character and life with an external standard; they are objective representations of sin, and it is these alone through which the conscience is first awakened and man convinced of the evil that is in him.

It is the contradiction of God's holiness.

But although these objective determinations are enough for duty, they are not enough for speculation. They do not satisfy the wants of science. We are impelled to go farther and inquire whether there is any specific quality which distinguishes sin, and by virtue of which all its forms and manifestations can be reduced to unity. Let us, therefore, now notice its *subjective* determinations. In fixing these, the first thing to be borne in mind is the ethical ground of God's right to the service of man. This ethical ground is the complete dependence of man upon God. The creature lives only in the will of the Creator. Its life, faculties and powers are only continued expressions of the will that underlies them.

Secondly: Subjective determinations.

The obvious relation implied in the term *creature* is that of absolute dependence on the will of the Creator. In himself, man is nothing. He is something only in his relations to the will of God. This gives to God an absolute right of property in him. The true ethical ground, therefore, is man's relation to God as the expression of His will and the product of His power. Now, as the ground of man's life is the will of God, the law of his life must also be that will. Dependence as *being* necessitates dependence as *moral being*. The moment you lose sight of this dependence you have, in so far as I can see, no ethical ground of right whatever. You cannot ground it in power, for superior power gives no right. For the same reason, you cannot ground it in wisdom. If the ground of man's existence be found in himself, and of God's in Himself, then from these elements there will emerge as clearly the idea of personal independence as there would in the relation of two creatures to each other. Hence, it is impossible to take a right start in tracing the doctrine of sin without taking in the idea of creation.

The true ethical ground of right and wrong.

We are now prepared to see the specific shape which obedience must take. There must a supreme devotion in the will of the creature to that of the Creator, and this devotion is supreme when there is not the slightest deviation of the former from the latter. This supreme devotion constitutes the moral condition of the soul indispensable to true holiness. Now, how is this condition to be expressed? Unquestionably in *Love*. But although love is the expression of obedience to law, we are not to suppose, as Müller has done in his work on Sin, that love exhausts the whole sphere of duty, and that everything commanded may be logically deduced from love. The duties of justice cannot by any possibility be construed into forms of benevolence. To speak the truth is not to love God, though love to God ensures truth. Love is the expression of that state of the heart which will induce and ensure universal obedience.

Involves our supreme devotion to God.

Thus, while it is the motive and ground of obedience, it does not constitute the whole object-matter of that obedience. It is the universal form, but not the universal matter. It is the ground-form, the motive-principle, but not the logical genus. We can now understand, also, the place which love to the creature occupies. Rule out the notion of creation, and where is the ethical ground of a single obligation of one creature to another? The whole question of right and obligation would resolve itself into one of power, wisdom or utility. The ethical ground would be gone. But introduce the idea of creation, place all other creatures in the same relation to God with our ourselves, and my relations to the creature are at once determined by our common relations to the Creator. In order to determine how I may love and use the creature aright, I must view it in its relations to the purpose of God. It was created for the manifestation of the Divine glory, and I love and use it aright when I do so with a view to the promotion of that glory in the purpose for which it was created. The subjective state of mind, therefore, which constitutes true holiness is that which corresponds to the sense of absolute dependence upon God as a creature, which expresses itself in supreme devotion to His will, and attaches itself to the creature only in its relations to God.

We are now prepared to find a clue to the nature of sin.

Sin is the denial of dependence on God.

(1.) It involves a negation of the feeling of dependence. This implies the impression of independence. Here we find the root of sin. This notion of independence, whether imperceptibly influencing the mind or consciously present, lies at the basis of all sin. (2.) Then comes another step—

It is estrangement from God.

that of positive estrangement from God. This assumes the form of direct opposition or open enmity to God. (3.) Then the subjective state into which sin resolves itself is that of self-affir-

It is self-affirmation.

mation, or love to the creature from self-relations, not from its relations to God. Self-affirmation is

a supreme law in relation to self-dependence, just as affirmation of God is a supreme law in relation to dependence upon God. Therefore, in the ultimate analysis, if you commence with self-dependence or independence as the ethical ground, you are obliged to end in self-affirmation. Most Calvinistic divines make the subjective state to be affirmation not simply of self, but of *the creature*. The creature, as well as self, is God. But in my opinion this view is defective. As love to the creature in a state of holiness is determined by its relations to the purpose of God, so, in a state of sin, that love is determined by relations to our own views and selfish purposes. *Self* is the central point from which everything, even God Himself, is contemplated.

If this analysis be correct, I resolve the whole subjective determination of sin into *self-affirmation*. To this there is one objection. It apparently conflicts with those phenomena of our nature in which we seem to act from principles independent of self—phenomena which seem to imply an entire forgetfulness of self and a disinterested attachment to the good of others—phenomena such are seen in the love of a mother for her offspring, in gratitude, compassion, etc. Now how will you explain these phenomena? Here, New-England divines are involved in serious error. They put self-love for the subjective determination of sin. They hold to a reflex operation of the mind in all such cases as those above, the man first considering the effect which the particular act will have upon himself, and then acting in reference to that effect. But you cannot explain in this way those elementary principles of our nature, those constitutional tendencies which Bishop Butler has so conclusively shown to exist back of the will. They do not admit of this reflex operation of the mind. But take the view of sin which I have presented, and the thing is plain. These principles are a part and parcel of our nature itself. Their exercise is but the evolution of what is within us.

Objection from certain natural affections.

Error of New-England divines.

The true explanation.

The actions to which they prompt are performed not in consequence of their relations to God and to holiness, but simply because the principles which lead to them are part of ourselves, and for no other reason. According to this limitation, we take in the whole of those principles embraced under the heads of virtue and prudence, bringing them all, from their relations to self, under the category of sin. I recommend to the class on this subject the work of Müller on the Christian Doctrine of Sin. His first book is not so clear as it might be, but his second contains many very striking thoughts. He makes the subjective determination of sin to be self-affirmation. I agree with him, therefore, as to his conclusion, though I differ as to the steps by which he reaches it.

Müller on Sin.

We have considered the nature of sin with respect both to its objective and subjective determinations. In the first aspect, it presents itself as the transgression of the law, disobedience to God and contradiction to His holiness. In the second, it appears as contradiction to the principle of absolute dependence implied in the very notion of a creature, and as a vain effort to realize the taunting lie of the tempter: "Ye shall be as gods." The law of sin, as an operative element in the soul, is the virtual assertion of self-supremacy and self-sufficiency. It makes man a God to himself. "What else is sin," says the venerable Howe,[1] "in the most comprehensive notion, but an undue imitation of God—an exalting of the creature's will into a supremacy, and opposing it, as such, to the Divine? To sin is to take upon us as if we were supreme and that there were no Lord over us; 'tis to assume to ourselves a deity as if we were under no law or rule, as He is not under any but what He is to Himself. Herein to be like God is the very core and malignity of sin." According to this reduction, sin is essentially apostasy—a dissolution of the tie which binds the creature in willing subjection to the Author of its being. It is a virtual denial of its own creaturehood, and a consequent rejec-

[1] Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. iv., § 1.

tion of the rights of the Creator. Its language is: "I am, and I am my own, and, therefore, have a right to live to myself." Considered as the renunciation of dependence upon God, it may be called unbelief; as the exaltation of itself to the place of God, it may be called pride; as the transferring to another object the homage due to the Supreme, it may be called idolatry; but in all these aspects the central principle is one and the same. "Self is the centre and end," as Howe[1] expresses it, "in which all must meet and terminate."

Selfishness is the root of sin.

It is interesting to notice how the objective and subjective determinations of sin completely coincide and harmonize. Selfishness is not only a motive principle which will infallibly engender all the forms of evil forbidden in the law, but it is itself a condensation of the very spirit of evil. It is itself a compendious violation of every precept of the law. In the first place, it begins in a lie; its first utterance is a falsehood, and that falsehood is blasphemy. In the next place, it is a fraud—a foul breach of justice—as it robs God of His rights and gives His glory to another. And what greater contempt can there be of the spirit of benevolence than to treat men as instruments of our own pleasure, and make ourselves a centre around which they must revolve? If the great fundamental requisites of the law can be reduced to truth, justice and benevolence, then the very essence of sin is contained, not only potentially but formally, in the principle of selfishness. It is falsehood, injustice and malice. When we have reached this principle, we have gone to the root of our disturbed moral life.

What is the formal nature of sin?

II. But while the objective determinations of sin indicate the things which are commanded or forbidden, and its subjective determinations fix the attitude in which the sinner stands, and detect the immediate ground of his transgressions, the question still remains, What constitutes the formal nature of

[1] Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. iv., § 8.

sin? Why are certain actions commanded by the law, and others forbidden? On what ground is one posture of the soul pronounced to be right and another wrong? These questions go to the bottom of the subject. To answer them will be to explain the reason of the law and the malignity of selfishness, and to reduce to unity both classes of determinations.

Moral distinctions not grounded in God's will,

1. There are those who have reduced moral distinctions to the arbitrary decisions of the Divine will. They refuse to seek any higher ground of the nature of virtue than that God commands it, or of the nature of vice than that God forbids it. They see no reason why the constitution of things might not have been so essentially different from what it is as that what we now commend as duty might have been condemned as a crime, and that what we now reprobate as sin might have been applauded as holiness. The only answer which they will allow to be given to the question concerning our moral judgments is that God has so willed. His will makes right and wrong as freely as it creates contingent beings. Virtue is right and vice is wrong for the same reason that some beings are rational and others dumb. This notion has been supposed to commend the supremacy of the Divine will. "But such authors," as Dugald Stewart justly remarks, "do not recollect that what they add to the Divine power and majesty they take away from His moral attributes, for if moral distinctions be not immutable and eternal, it is absurd to speak of the goodness or of the justice of God."[1] The history of this opinion, as it appeared among the scholastics, and subsequently reappeared among the high Calvinists of the Supralapsarian school, it is unnecessary here to investigate. It is enough to say that it cuts up by the roots every effort to apprehend the character of God from the works of His hands. If His will be arbitrary, groundless, what He wills cannot reveal what He is. He does not express Himself in His works. "By such a determination," Müller acutely observes,[2] "the contents of the

[1] Works, vol. vi., p. 299.

[2] Doctrine of Sin, vol. i., p. 98.

moral law would become for God Himself, although the product of His will, a foreign, an external one, because it would have no relation whatever to His nature. To say that the will of God is determined by the fullness of His own being, is in no sense to limit or condition Him. It is simply to affirm that He is Himself, that He acts like Himself and can never deny Himself. To make an arbitrary separation betwixt His will and His intelligence, and to suppose that He is capable of acting from mere caprice, is to condition Him by imperfections which are disreputable to a creature.

but in His nature,

God's nature is the ground of God's will. It always has a reason, and that reason is found in His own necessary and immutable perfections. His will is Himself, the fullness of His wisdom and goodness and holiness in action, as well as of His power. To Him the right is not law—it is His life; it is not duty—it is His being, and it becomes law to the creature through the intervention of His wise and holy will. There is no eternal law of duty; law begins with the creature, but there is in the Divine Being an eternal ground of law or measure of right.

One important step we have gained. We have traced moral distinction to the nature of God. As He is the fountain of all being, He is the fountain of all righteousness. The sublime declaration, "I am," is without a predicate, because it has a fullness of contents which precludes any other predicate than itself. It is an important point we have gained. Moral distinctions are seen to be as eternal and immutable in their ground as the nature of God. They

and make us like or unlike God.

are further revealed as making us either like or unlike God. The just is that which assimilates to Him; the unjust that which contradicts His image. Likeness to God is holiness; unlikeness, sin.

2. But the question still returns upon us, What is that quality or property the possession of which makes us like God—the absence of which, unlike? What is that specific

thing called *righteousness* which the law declares, and which springs from the very being of the Almighty? This question has been variously answered. Some make the common quality of right to consist in the relation of things to our own happiness; and others, in the relation to the happiness of our fellow-men; and others again have combined both tendencies in their theories of virtue. These theories, however, all give to virtue an origin in the creature; they ground it in finite relations. If we are to make it relative and resolve it into tendencies of any kind, it would be far more consistent with its source in the nature of God to define it by its tendency to promote His glory. All such solutions are unsatisfactory, because they presuppose that we are already in possession of what we are seeking? It is clear that we can know neither our own good, nor the good of others, nor the glory of God, until we know what good itself is. To have determined the good is to have settled the whole question. The only unity in right according to this method of procedure is an unity of relation; there is no unity among the things themselves which we denominate from it. They agree in nothing but a common tendency. The question, therefore, still recurs upon us after all these solutions, What is right? We answer that it is, as Locke would express it, a simple idea, or, as more recent philosophers might prefer to designate it, an original intuition, which we are no more capable of explaining than we are of defining any other ultimate truth. It is the thing apprehended by reason in the operations of conscience, as the world or ourselves are apprehended in perception and consciousness. It is the fundamental datum of the moral understanding. In every operation of conscience there is involved a perception as well as a feeling. Though these are indissolubly united in the act, they are separable in thought. The feeling is the sense of duty and the sense of merit and demerit; the perception is that the thing is right.

They are not grounded in any finite relations.

We must know what good itself is.

The right, an original intuition.

Conscience does not make the right, it only declares it; the right exists independently of it, as the world exists independently of our senses. We could not know it without conscience, but a condition of knowledge must not be confounded with a condition of existence. The right is a reality whether we perceive it or not, and when perceived it is perceived as an absolute reality, a reality for all minds.

A reality, but

But conscience recognizes the right under manifold forms. Truth is right, justice is right, benevolence is right, temperance is right—the habits which prompt to the observance of these virtues are right; but are all these one and the same right? If one, in what does their unity consist? The actions of truth are certainly different from those of temperance; the actions of benevolence are as clearly different from those of justice; the habits are obviously so many different subjective states. Where, then, is the unity, and why is the same term applied in common to them all? It is obvious that no analysis of duties and no comparison of the things commanded by our moral nature can ever conduct us to any other unity than that of a common subjective affirmation. They are all right because they all sustain the same relation to conscience. Like truth, their coincidence is found in the possession of the same subjective necessity of affirmation. But is there not a higher unity in which all these laws are ultimately grounded? Is there not a common ground of their common relation to the conscience? Unquestionably there is. If righteousness springs from the Divine nature, if it is founded in the very being of God as wise, good and intelligent, then it has an objective unity which is determined by the mode of its subjective affirmation in God. Righteousness is that which holiness affirms. Righteousness applies to the matter of right objectively considered; holiness applies to the Divine intelligence as loving, approving and commanding it. Whatever a holy God enjoins, that is the thing which is right.

under manifold forms.

All these have a common relation to the holiness of God.

We have now reached a second step. We have seen, *first*, that moral distinctions are eternal and necessary as grounded in the nature of God. We have seen, *next*, that the unity of rectitude, considered as an object and as predicable of actions and motives, consists in their relation to the holiness of God. Their repugnance to or congruity with that determines the point whether they are right or wrong. What God's holy will embraces, that is right; what it rejects and abhors, that is wrong.

The nature of holiness,

3. Our next step must be to investigate the nature of holiness. It is evidently distinguished from right as a faculty is distinguished from its object. It is properly expressive only of a subjective condition. But is it a single attribute in God co-ordinate with those of truth, justice, goodness; or a single habit in man co-ordinate with other single habits of specific virtues? If so, there is no absolute unity in rectitude; there would be different forms of right, answering to the different moral perfections of God, and each as distinct from the others as intelligence in God is distinct from will. There would be no unity among human virtues but their common relation to the laws of conscience. But holiness is not to be thus restricted. It is not co-ordinate with the other moral perfections of God, but inclusive of them. It is that in which they are contained, from which they spring, and by which they are determined. They are all so many expressions of it. "It comprehends," as Howe justly remarks, "His righteousness and veracity, and, indeed, whatever we can conceive in Him under the notion of a moral excellency. It may, therefore, be styled a transcendental attribute, that, as it were, runs through the rest and casts a glory upon every one; it is an attribute of attributes. Those are fit predications, holy power, holy truth, holy love, etc. And so it is the very lustre and glory of His other perfections; He is glorious in holiness. Hence, in matters of greatest moment He is sometimes brought in swearing by His holiness, which He is not wont to do by

in God,

any one single attribute, as though it were a fuller expression of Himself, an *adequatior conceptus*, than any of the rest."[1] The reason of such representations is that holiness implies the fullness and energy of God's delight in righteousness. It is the very life of that love and blessedness which flows from His own infinite self-sufficiency. God is love. His being is love, and the expressions of that love are the different streams of right, which originally in Him, flow out upon rational creatures in the form of law and righteousness. In other words, God, as a holy being, contemplates Himself as His own infinite good; and the blessedness of the Divine nature is but the delight of the Divine holiness in His being what He is. Without this infinite delight in Himself as the good, moral distinctions could not possibly emerge. Without the presence of love, the good could not be thought of—it would be an unmeaning term. It is the fullness of love to His own perfections which determines Him to express them, and to stamp them in some degree upon every work of His hands. Hence, His holiness pervades His whole being; underlies every divine activity; prompts every divine energy. It actuates every perfection. God could not move without it;—He would cease to be God. As thus taken up, or rather contained, in the infinite love of God, infinite righteousness becomes something more than the right—it becomes the good; and is the right precisely because it is the good. This is the highest point that we can reach. This is the highest unity which we can find in rectitude. It is the centre of the Divine love, the spring of the Divine life, and the perfection of the Divine blessedness. Remove this love in God, and you destroy the unity of His whole nature.

and in man.

So holiness in man is not a detached habit co-ordinate with other habits and states, neither is it a compendious expression for a complement of habits. There may be specific virtues, such as truth, temperance, fortitude and courage, but these are not suffi-

[1] Blessedness of the Righteous, chap. v., p. 68.

cient to entitle a man to the distinction of holiness. As a state in contradistinction from its exercises, holiness is a nature, and by a *nature* we understand not the collection of properties which distinguish one being from another, but a generic disposition which determines, modifies and regulates all its activities and habits—the law of its mode of life. It is that out of which specific habits grow, from which every single action ultimately proceeds. It is not to be confounded with the substance of the soul, the actions of the soul, or definite conditions of the soul; it lies back of them all, and conditions them in all their operations. There is a nature in the lion, the tiger and the dog which determines their manner of life—a nature in all beings which makes them what they are. Without it there could be no character, no habits, no consistent action; it is the invisible thread of unity which runs through the whole life and gives it its coherence. As lying out of consciousness, we cannot define it, but its effects are so obvious and palpable that we are compelled to accept it as a necessary faith. Those who reject it on the ground that the consciousness reveals nothing but faculties and acts, will find themselves involved in inextricable difficulty in their attempts to solve some of the simplest problems of life. They must deny all habits as states of mind, whether original or acquired, and especially must they deny that there are any such things as moods of feeling which modify and colour the succession of our thoughts. They must deny a cheerful temperament, a morose temperament or an equable temperament, or that any such generic peculiarities exert an influence upon the flow of our thoughts.

But as there are within the sphere of our daily experience various generic dispositions, each of which serves as the basis of very different habits, there is nothing incredible in supposing—nay, unless we propose to dismember human life, it is absolutely necessary to suppose—that there must be one great central disposition in which all others are rooted. The general temper of sadness has numberless manifesta-

tions; the same is true of joy; and why should there not be a tone of mind in which all virtuous activities are united? To illustrate the all-pervading influence of holiness as a nature, the Scriptures employ the striking analogy of life. When we ask the question, What is life? we soon become sensible that we are dealing with a subject which eludes the capacity of thought. We cannot seize it in itself. We see its effects, we witness its operations, we mark the symptoms which distinguish its presence. But the thing itself escapes our nicest analysis. We can only speak of it as the mysterious, unknown cause of numberless phenomena which experience forces on our notice. Where is life? Is it here and not there? Is it there and not here? Is it in the heart, the head, the hands, the feet? It evidently pervades the man; it is the condition, the indispensable condition, of the organic action of every part of the frame. The body may be perfect in its structure, it may have every limb and nerve and muscle, and foreign influences may be made to mimic the operations of life, but if life be not there these actions or rather motions are essentially distinct from those of the living man. In like manner holiness pervades the soul. Though not a habit, nor a collection of habits, it is the indispensable condition of them all. It is not here nor there, but is diffused through the whole man—the understanding, the will, the conscience, the affections; it underlies all dispositions and habitudes, and is felt in all the thoughts and desires. All moral qualities inhere in it as their fundamental form. It is the point of unity to the whole spiritual life.

Illustrated in the Scriptures by life.

In its exercises and manifestations in consciousness it is the delight and rest of the soul in God as the perfect good, because the perfectly just. It sees in righteousness not only the authority which makes it duty or the rectitude which makes it merit, but it sees a beauty and glory which makes it blessedness. Its longings are after God distinctly as the holy God, and its deepest utterances are those of profound adoration and praise on account of His immaculate

purity. It is ravished with the glory of the Lord because that glory is only the splendour of His holiness. It is fundamentally the principle of supreme love to Him as the supreme good. His holiness is the central point of attraction, and all His other perfections—His independence, omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience—all that belong to the eternity and immutability of His being, are awful and venerable as they are pervaded and inspired by His infinite righteousness. He might be an object of dread and terror, and might extract the homage of slaves and vassals, if He were possessed only of infinite power and infinite knowledge, but He could never be loved, trusted and adored. He could awaken no feeling which deserves to be called religious if He were not the Holy One who inhabiteth the praises of eternity. Now in this supreme love to God as the good there are included in inseparable unity a perception of the understanding and a sentiment of the heart. Both are given and both are contained in one single, indivisible operation of consciousness. The perception is of the beauty of holiness, the ultimate standard of every other form of beauty. It is seen to be intrinsically glorious; it appeals directly to our love; it presents that which is fitted to awaken it. The sentiment of the heart is the response of love which it freely sends forth; it looks with delight upon the glorious object. The soul burns with the ardour of desire, and sees in the possession of the lovely object a perfect and a satisfying good. The will is necessitated to choose what is presented under these aspects of beauty and attraction, and its spontaneous language is, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." Hence, holiness in man pervades the soul in all the forms of its existence as a nature or as in exercise. It is light in the understanding, beauty to the heart, and good to the will. It appeals to every faculty and addresses itself to every energy, and it is in man as in God, his life and his glory. It is that in which

Holiness is supreme love to God as the supreme good.

action and speculation are fused into one; thought becomes sentiment and sentiment becomes thought, and the essence of both is love.

From this investigation of the nature of the ideas of right and holiness, it is an obvious inference that there can be no holiness in any creature in which the notion of the right is not carried up to the notion of the good. It is not enough to recognize a thing as duty, as that which ought to be done, and which entitles the agent to commendation for obedience. This is the sphere of a cold and cheerless morality. There must be the love of the thing as beautiful and becoming, as assimilating the soul to God and bringing it into a condition to enjoy His favour. The heart must respond to the conscience, and the intrinsic blessedness of rectitude must be its highest and sweetest commendation. The man who can ask the question why he should choose the right, or what is the ground of the authority of the duty, shows that he has never risen to the sphere of spiritual life, and has yet to have awakened within him the Divine cognition of the good. His eyes have never yet gazed upon real beauty, nor his heart been warmed with real love.

It is the right carried up into the good and heart must respond to conscience.

The right and the good are, of course, objectively the same, and in all holy beings they are subjectively the same, or rather the right is apprehended intuitively as right because it is the good. But in sinners the case is quite different. The notion of the right precedes the notion of the good, and in multitudes the notion of the good is never realized at all. It is a notion which the law must presuppose, but which it cannot give. Where it has been lost it can be restored only by the supernatural illumination of the Spirit. Conscience always remains, but all that it can do is to proclaim the right as duty, to awaken the sense of obligation, to appeal to our hopes and fears. This right is clothed with awful majesty, and sometimes speaks in tones of thunder, but it knows no avenue to the heart. Its aspect for the most part

With sinners, the right and the good do not coincide,

is cold and passionless; it exists as a rigid rule with as little sweetness and flexibility. It attracts no love, it inspires no warm and glowing emotion, it never captivates nor ravishes. We have to throw around it external associations of pleasure and delight; we have to dwell upon its promises of good or its threats of evil; we have to descend from its own lofty sphere and clothe it in the dress of the lower objects around us which fascinate and please before we can make it enlist our sympathies or elicit our affections. We endeavour to bribe our children into the love of it by the charms of its dowry and the utter poverty which must waste those that are destitute of its rewards. These expedients of daily experience, the general tendency to confound the right with the useful, or to resolve it into some modification of pain and pleasure, are melancholy confessions that man in his blindness has lost the true perception of the good. Could he see the right as it is in its own nature, could he behold its beauty, its glory, its transcendent loveliness, the heart would turn with disgust from any lower motives for embracing it than those which are drawn from itself. As the good it is its own perfect argument; it needs no other advocate and no other plea than its own intrinsic excellence. Kant deifies duty, apostrophizes it in glowing terms as an idol, and maintains that the more thoroughly an action is determined by the sole consideration of duty the more deserving it is. On the contrary, if the whole foregoing speculation is not a delusion, it is indisputably clear that he who is influenced solely by *a sense* in contradistinction from *the love* of duty—he, in other words, who acts because he must on pain of penalties, and not because he delights in the act as just—is as truly pervaded by the principle of sin as he who chooses a lower good at the risk of a greater ill. The naked sense of duty can make an obedient slave, but never make a holy man. Duty is grand and glorious when the object of duty is first apprehended as the good, and it is a sublime principle of action when the

for man has lost the perception of the good.

An error of Kant.

sense of duty coincides with the perception and love of the holy, just and true.

4. Having thus analyzed the nature of the qualities which we denominate right into primitive cognitions, and having seen under what condition alone the apprehension of the right dignifies a being with the distinction of holiness, we proceed to notice what constitutes the nature of sin considered from the same qualitative point of view. The question here is attended with little difficulty, from the manifest relation of contrast and opposition in which sin and holiness stand to each other.

Sin considered from this qualitative point of view.

As holiness, materially considered, is the right, it is obvious that sin must, first of all, be determined as the absence or privation of the right. It is the non-right. Whenever right is not found where it should be found, the absence is sin. The distinction betwixt *priration* and *simple negation* is of vital importance in appreciating this determination. Each denotes, as the Schoolmen and all Calvinistic divines have been accustomed to remark, the absence of something positive in the subject; but they differ in this, that mere *negation* obtains when the subject is not naturally capable of the wanting reality—*privation* when it is capable. Simple negation denies to a subject qualities which do not belong to its nature; privation, qualities which ought to be found in it. We can say of a stone that it cannot see—this is simple *negation*. We cannot say of it that it is blind—that would be *privation*, and would imply the notion that vision was a perfection of which a stone was competent. On the other hand, we can predicate blindness of man, because the power of vision naturally belongs to him. Privation has been further distinguished into *physical* and *logical;* it is physical when it denotes the absence of a perfection that might be present, but whose absence implies no censure and involves no positive detriment; logical, when it denotes the absence of a perfection which

Sin is the not-right.

Privation and simple negation.

ought to be present, and whose loss implies censure or involves serious evil. Physical privation removes perfections, but does not mutilate the conformity of a being with its idea; logical privation mutilates the very idea of the being. This is the kind of privation to which the determination of sin must be referred. It is the want of a perfection which belongs to the idea of a subject. The heart into which it enters wants the positive perfection of rectitude; the state of mind to which it is applied is a state of mind discriminated as evil by the circumstance that it is not right. In all omissions of duty the privation is found in the absence of the acts themselves, which, in the given circumstances, were right.

The Augustinian doctrine of sin as privation.

From the days of Augustin down this determination of sin as privation—as simply the not-right—has been the prevailing doctrine of Calvinistic divines. It has been resolutely maintained that sin has no positive being of its own—it has no real entity, but apart from the notion of defect in a given act, state or habit, is a mere nothing. The act, state or habit wants something. The something which it wants is a positive perfection—it is the quality of rectitude. But the want itself represents a pure vacuum; it is equivalent to saying that there, where the perfection ought to be, there is emptiness—a blank moral space which is nothing. The acts, states or habits, considered in themselves—that is, as far forth as they have a real positive being and express the exercise of positive faculties, or the positive condition of the faculties—are good. An act is never sinful in itself, but only *per accidens;* as far forth as you can say of it that it is, so far forth it is good; it is only when you say of it that it is not, and only in relation to what it is not, that it can be called sinful. The whole substance of this theory is pregnantly condensed into a few words by the Master of the Sentences:

Peter Lombard quoted.

"Quidam autem diligenter attendentes verba Augustini, quibus supra et in aliis Scripturæ locis utitur, non indocte tradunt voluntatem malam et actus malos, in quantum sunt, vel in quantum actus sunt, bona esse;

in quantum vero mala sunt, peccata esse; qui voluntatem et actum quemcunque bonam Dei naturam esse dicunt, in quantum actus est vel voluntas, et ex Deo auctore esse; in quantum vero inordinate et contra legem Dei fit, et fine debito caret, peccatum est; et ita in quantum peccatum est, nihil est. Nulla enim substantia est, nulla natura est."[1]

Motive of the doctrine.

The motive, as seen in this extract, which prompted Augustin and those who have followed in his footsteps to insist so strenuously upon the purely privative character of sin, was the laudable desire to vindicate God from the imputation of being, in any proper sense, the author of evil. Recognizing His will as the first and supreme cause of all real existences, they could not attribute to sin a nature and a being; they could not predicate of it anything that was positive without bringing it into the category of creatures, and thus making it the product of the Almighty. The dilemma was, It is either a creature or it is not. If it is a creature, God made it. The blasphemy here being too shocking to be believed, they took the other horn and affirmed that it was no creature, and that therefore in itself considered it was nothing. "It presupposes," says Van Mastricht, "something positive in which it inheres as in a subject, but itself is nothing positive or real. If it were, it would require the First Cause as its author, inasmuch as nothing positive or real can exist which is not necessarily dependent upon him. In the mean time, it is not to be regarded as purely negative, since then it would neither be evil nor punishable by God. Nothing, therefore, remains but to regard it as privative, or as the absence of a moral good which ought to be present."[2]

Van Mastricht quoted.

De Moor quoted.

De Moor, the able and learned, but very little known commentator on the Compendium of Marck, says, substantially: "Everything physical, everything real and positive, is from God; therefore, every act, considered as act, or as a certain quantum of reality. Hence, sin cannot be anything real or positive. Should it

[1] Lib. ii., dist. 35, § 4. [2] Theol., lib. iv., cap. secund., § xxi.

be asserted that sin has a positive existence, then it must follow that there are motions and acts, as, for example, in theft and whoring, which according to their real being cannot be referred to God as their first cause. We must go even farther, and posit the existence of substances produced by these independent acts or motions, as in the case of fornication and adultery, which are independent of God, and of which He is not the author or creator. In a word, we must either, with the Manichees, postulate another and an independent principle as the cause of evil, or with the Pelagians reduce the providence of God in relation to our actions to a naked conservation of our own energies and powers, or to a general influence subject to be determined by the will of the creature."[1] I cannot forbear to add here a passage which De Moor quotes[2] with unequivocal approbation from Burmann: "I am of opinion," says he, "that all sin is privative, and that the distinction betwixt the act itself and the sinfulness of the act is of universal validity, not only in relation to acts which are materially good, but become accidentally evil—as when one gives alms from the desire of applause—but also in relation to acts which are regarded as intrinsically bad, such as the blaspheming of God. No sinful act can be conceived which is not founded in some natural and positive act, for sin always dwells in another's soil. In the case of homicide, there is first a natural and positive act; to this is added a privation. Remove the privation, and the act becomes morally good, as in the execution of a criminal by the command of the magistrate. So blasphemy is nothing without the natural motion of the mind or tongue, to which the want of conformity with the law is added. Unless now you distinguish betwixt these, you fall into inextricable difficulty. For if that natural action, which is something positive and real, is to be withdrawn from God, then He will not be the author of all that is positive or real; which is the same as to say that He is not God, as the very notion of God includes the dependence

Burmann quoted.

[1] Cap. xv., § 4, p. 5, 6. [2] Ibid.

of all things upon Him. If, on the other hand, you refer all that is positive to God, and yet maintain that sin is something positive, you then, by inevitable necessity, make God its cause and author. How you can escape from this dilemma I see not. Paul preached to the Athenians that in Him we live and move and have our being. Think you that he meant only the pious and good motions of the Gentiles, of which there were manifestly none, or they were very rare? Were not their inordinate motions, whether natural or moral, in so far as they were real and positive, moved in God in whom they lived and were? Therefore the homicide, the thief, the blasphemer, exercising the hand and tongue in wickedness, will either move themselves independently of God in these motions, as far forth as they are natural and positive, or, if they are moved in God, He becomes the author of their crimes. Upon the hypothesis that the sin and the act are not to be discriminated, there is no alternative between withdrawing from God the principal part of His providence, or making Him the author of sin." The same argument is much more pithily expressed by the Master of the Sentences: "To those who maintain that all acts, as far forth as they have a being, are good, it is objected—If all things that are, as far forth as they are, are good and are natures, then adultery, murder and the like are good and are natures, and consequently from God. Those accordingly who commit such crimes do good, which is palpably absurd. The reply is, that adultery, homicide and the like do not simply denote acts, but the defects of acts; that the acts themselves, as far forth as they contain reality, are from God, and are good natures; but not in as far as they are adultery and murder"[1] —that is, not in as far as they want a reality which they have not.

Lombard quoted again.

Later theologians[2] have resolved the difficulty by distinguishing betwixt sin in the concrete and sin in the abstract. Sin in the concrete is improperly and loosely taken; sin in

[1] Lib. ii., dist. 35, § 8. [2] Vide De Moor, ch. 15, § 4, p. 8.

the abstract is that alone which is strictly and properly sin.

Sin in the concrete and in the abstract.

Sin in the concrete includes the notion of the act or subject, which is hence called sinful; sin in the abstract expresses nothing but the privation which obtains, which, considered in relation to itself, is a mere nothing, and cannot be conceived, but in relation to the being in whom the defect is found, it can be conceived through the negation of the perfection which is removed.

The theory of privation consistently carried out denies to sin the metaphysical distinctions of matter and form. In its concrete sense the act itself may be considered as matter, and the nonconformity with law the form. But in the abstract, which is the only true sense, the terms *matter* and *form* have no legitimate application. Every physical act as such has its own matter and form, and both, considered as belonging to the sphere of real being, are good. But privation obviously has no matter, for it is nothing, and as obviously no form, for form is perfective of matter, and privation renders it imperfect.[1]

An expression of Augustin explained.

From this view of the privative theory of sin the import of an expression of Augustin, which has been grievously misunderstood, or, if not misunderstood, most perversely applied, can be readily collected. "There is no sin," says he, "which does not attach itself to the good." The meaning simply is, that sin presupposes a real subject, and every real subject to the extent of its reality is good. If found in an action, the action as a physical entity is good; if found in a habit, the habit as implying facility of action is good; if attributed to an agent, the agent in so far as he has being at all is good. All that is is good, and is the creature of good. What is not is not good, and is not the creature of God. Hence, his famous comment on the passage, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

[1] De Moor, ch. 15, § 4, p. 8.

The Vitringas refute, and Wesselius defends this theory.

Those who wish to see an able refutation on the one hand and defence on the other of the theory of privation as the sole theory of sin, will find ample satisfaction in the writings of Vitringa, father and son, and in a learned dissertation of Wesselius, to which De Moor constantly refers. In its exclusive features we find it impossible to adopt it. While we are prepared to say—and our previous analysis requires us to say—that all privation of the right where it should be found is sin, and that all sin also includes privation, we cannot reconcile it with the facts of consciousness or the teachings of Scripture to say that all sin is mere negation. This is to make of it a shadowy ghost which the next breath of speculation may dissolve into thin air.

Objections: it is founded upon a double confusion.

(1.) In the first place, the theory is founded upon a double confusion, that of positive and real with substantial being, and that of being with the good. Its favourite postulate is, whatever has real being is a good nature, and is from God. Here, real being means a separate and independent being, or a being which has a definite quantative measure. A being that is a nature is a being that has the law of its operation in itself; it is a thing of itself, and hence cannot be regarded as the state or quality of another existence. When these divines speak of moral perfection as a reality, they evidently impose upon themselves the illusion that they have found something which has a higher quantum of existence than a mere *ens rationis*, and they evidently take for granted that the virtuous man has more being in him than the wicked. But it must be remembered that the words *being*, *existence*, *reality*, are the widest predicates that any language admits—that they refer to all that is cogitable, and are determined in their import by the subjects of which they are affirmed. There is subjective existence as a matter of thought, as when a centaur is represented in the imagination; there is objective existence as a substance or attribute; there is logical existence as a quality, or condition, or rela-

tion. In all these cases being is affirmed; in fact, every proposition is the predication of existence: even when sin is said to be privation, existence is attributed to the nothing. Hence, it does not follow that existence involves necessarily any substantive properties which require the subject of it to be regarded as a creature of God. There may be qualities and states of being which depend upon ourselves; there may be postures of our wills; there may be positive determinations of our wills which have a reality, but a reality which we ourselves put into them. There may be loves and hates which God never made, but which are as positively thinkable and as positively felt as the holiest affections which spring from Him. The devil, considered in relation to the mere *quantum* of existence, may have as large a mass of entity as an angel or a seraph.

The other confusion is that of metaphysical and moral good. When mere being is called a *good*, we are moving in a very different sphere of thought from that in which we affirm that virtue is a *good*. When non-being is affirmed to be evil, it is in a very different sense from that in which evil is predicated of sin. To make the *quantum* of existence or the amount of reality that any subject contains the measure of good, is to make every finite creature to the extent of its finiteness evil. All limitations of existence are deprivations of good. If now moral and metaphysical evil are to be confounded, it is evident that virtue must be placed in being and sin in non-being. This consummation was actually reached both by Edwards and Augustin. The former makes the very essence of virtue consist in the love of being as such, and the latter does not hesitate to assert that the characteristic of sin is its tendency to non-being. It is an eternal gravitation toward nothing. These are the errors which disfigure the great work of Leibnitz. He refers sin for its possibility to the necessary limitations of the creature; he makes it spring from defects of being, and goes very near towards confounding it with the simple notion of the finite. Such speculations, which, after all, are a mere

juggle with words, have a strong tendency to dissipate the consciousness of sin; they reduce it from the proportions of strong and positive contrast—may I not say of strong and lusty reality?—in which it is presented in the Scripture to an empty shade, a phantom that haunts the imagination, but has no real existence in nature.

It fails of the purpose for which invented.

(2.) In the next place, the theory does not advance us one step in solving the riddle for which it has been so elaborately worked out. It leaves the question of God's relation to the origin of evil precisely where it found it. Evil, it is said, is no real being, no creature, therefore God did not make it. It would seem to be as legitimate a conclusion, therefore, man did not make it; and another step seems to be inevitable, therefore it does not exist. But a perfection is not where it ought to be. Now the perfection either never was in the creature or it has been removed. If it never was in the creature, then God certainly, as the author of the creature, is the author of the defect. If it was once there, but has been removed, either God removed it or the creature. If God removed it, He is still the author of the evil. If the creature removed it, the act of removing it was either sinful or it was not. If the act were sinful, the whole theory is abandoned, and we have sin as something real, positive and working; if the act were not sinful, how can sin proceed from a good volition? The truth is, the theory utterly breaks down when it approaches this great question, and the result of its boasted solution is that moral evil is reduced to zero.

It contradicts consciousness.

(3.) In the third place, the theory is utterly inconsistent with our own consciousness, which affirms that there are evil habits and dispositions and acts as strongly positive as those which are holy. There is a power of evil as intensely real as the energy of holiness. Malice is as intensely real as love; revenge as intensely real as gratitude; avarice as intensely real as liberality. Whatever meaning you apply to the terms *being, real, positive*, in the one case, we feel that it

holds equally in the other. The *quantum* is as strongly marked on the side of the bad as of the good. I do not know that I can place this point in a clearer light than by extracting from Wesselius a passage in which he undertakes to explain how a malignant disposition can be good considered as a creature, and evil considered as malignant. He is replying to the objection of Vitringa, that the sinfulness of an act cannot be separated from the act, except in thought. "The greatest difficulty," says he, "is found in the precepts touching the love of God, which is absolutely indispensable, and in relation to the prohibition of idolatry, blasphemy and profaneness, in which the hatred of God becomes conspicuous. Can these ever physically exist apart from their viciousness? Can there ever be the worship of the sun and stars and the blasphemy of God without sin? Can the act as a physical entity be distinguished from its moral wickedness?" Wesselius admits that these acts are in their nature evil, but he does not grant that they could not physically exist without crime. He affirms that they are "immutably and unchangeably bad in man, as contradictory to an immutable and eternal law. Their sinfulness, however, does not arise from the nature of the acts as physical entities, but from the nature of the Divine law, and from the condition of man as a moral agent under that law. These same acts could exist as physical entities in other beings without blame; as, for example, in a brute or an idiot. If he should call upon the sun or an idol, he might exhibit the same external act, he might even have the internal impulse to bend the knee; and if a parrot should mimic words of blasphemy against God, would not in these cases the acts exist as physical entities without sin? For sin is non-conformity with law, and law is competent only to a free agent endowed with reason. Hence, an act cannot be morally sinful from the nature of the act itself, but from the condition of the agent, who is under law; and therefore the nature of moral evil can neither lie in the act nor its mode, physically considered, for they can be posited without sin, but in

its non-conformity with law, which being posited sin is posited, and which being removed sin is removed."[1] Did it not occur to these divines that they had as completely annihilated virtue as vice?—that this process of reasoning reduces all moral distinctions to sheer abstractions?

Action must be moral.

To admit that sin is inseparable from these things as performed by a rational being, is to give up the whole question; and the reason precisely is, that it is only as performed by rational beings that they become, in any proper sense, actions at all. It is not enough to constitute an act that there should be animal life or physical force; it is not the amount of exertion that it involves nor the tension of muscle that it exacts. Mere motion is not action; it wants what belongs to the very essence of action—a relation to thought and purpose. None but an intelligent being can act; others can live and move, but it is the prerogative of reason alone to give birth to actions. An action is properly the language of the will, and its real significancy is the motive or end which the will puts into it. The motion, without this rational consent, would be as far removed from the nature of an act as the senseless cries of a brute from the articulate speech of a man. As it is its relation to the will which constitutes the very essence of an action, it is clear that the question as to the possibility of separating in thought betwixt an action and its moral character is really the question whether the determinations of the will, whether the thoughts and purposes of the heart, can be abstracted in thought from the moral qualities which attach to them. If there are cases in which this separation cannot be made—in which the very being of a given volition or of a given purpose is sin, as in the instances specified of blasphemy and idolatry; if in the only sense in which these things can be considered as actions in contradistinction to mere motions instinctively or mechanically produced, they cannot be detached from their moral significancy—it is clear that the whole hypothesis which makes the action entirely

[1] De Moor, ch. 15, § 4, p. 8.

independent in its origin of any evil import falls to the ground. We are compelled to say that some actions at least, considered as actions, are sinful.

The theory requires an extravagant and shameful distinction.

There is one class of writers who, seeing how utterly vain it is to attempt an escape from this conclusion, and yet determined to maintain the hypothesis that God is the author of everything that has a real and positive existence, have sought to save the character of God in exciting within men wicked thoughts and purposes by a distinction which, of itself, is enough to cover the whole theory with shame and confusion. Sin, say they, is determined by the law, and always supposes that he who commits it is a subject of law. God is under no law; on the contrary, He is above all law, and therefore incapable of sin. He excites within men thoughts, purposes and volitions, and moves them to acts which in them are sinful, because forbidden by the law under which they are placed, but in Him they are not so. He, therefore, as being above law, is guiltless in stirring those to rebellion who are under law. To place the matter in another light: Every act of man is also the act of God—He is the first cause, and He determines the human will in every motion of it by an irresistible influence. As far as the act is the work of God, it is without sin, because as His it is contradictory to no law; as far as it is the act of man it is sin, because contradictory to the law of his being. "God," says Wesselius,[1] "does not sin in producing, as the first cause, the act which the sinning creature produces as a second cause, because no such defect can be attributed to Him as attaches to a creature in consequence of its relation to law. God would sin in moving the sinning creature if He were subject to the same laws which bind the creature. Adam sinned in eating of the forbidden fruit, because in him it was contradictory to law; God did not sin in moving him to the act, because there was no law to prevent the Divine motions. Fallen and corrupted man continually sins inwardly and outwardly

[1] De Moor, ch. 15, § 4, p. 8.

by violating the eternal law of love to God and his neighbour; God commits no sin in moving man according to his corrupt nature, because the royal law is for man alone, and does not extend to God, otherwise God would be bound to invoke worship and adore His own name." And again: "The same act is put forth by God and the creature, yet so as that the creature sins and not God, because God is beyond or above law. The prince sins who should slay a son in the place of his father, because the prince is bound by the law which prohibits such conduct. God does not sin in punishing the sins of parents in the persons of their children, because, in this respect, He is beyond the law—to whom belongs supreme jurisdiction as the sovereign Lord."

Zeal of Augustin and of his successors for this theory accounted for.

These are specimens of the extravagant lengths to which consistency in maintaining a crotchet has driven even wise and good men. The recoil of Augustin from the monstrous hypothesis of the Manichees accounts for the prominence and shape which he gave to the scheme of privation; and the zeal of his successors to vindicate the Divine purity, while asserting at the same time the Divine supremacy, accounts for the nice distinctions by which sin has been really deprived of its revolting features, and all moral distinctions almost buried in a remorseless fate. Theology may well exclaim as she surveys the apologies and pleas which ingenuity has reared in her defence: "Save me from my friends! *Non tali auxilio*, etc."

It destroys all real significance in the creature,

(4.) The last and most fatal objection to this scheme is, that it maintains a doctrine of providence which is totally inconsistent with any real significance in the creature. It makes God all in all in a sense so absolute that if it be not strictly chargeable with Pantheism, it comes to the same practical result. It does not confound God with His works, nor reduce the finite and infinite to the unity of a common substance; but it does so completely annihilate the creature as to any real being and real efficiency that nothing is seen or

recognized but God Himself. The creature, practically, is nothing and does nothing. It is merely the medium through which God operates and acts. He is the only real cause that exists. He produces every positive effect that takes place. All power is lodged exclusively in Him, and the motions and determinations of other beings are only the results of His moving and controlling energy. The creature has no power of originating any beginnings in itself. There is no sphere in which it can act by virtue of its own constitution maintained and upheld by the Divine support. That there is a *concursus* of God, without which beings could neither exist nor act, is implied in the very notion of dependence; that this *concursus* strips them of every property and reduces them, especially personal agents, to mere instruments or organs of the Divine energy, is equally destructive of any real being at all. The Scriptures teach explicitly that we live and move and have our being in God; they just as explicitly teach that we do live and move and have a being. We are not a sham—we are a something; and, as being a something, can do something.

and confounds the efficient and the permissive decrees.

Of course, this scheme which deserves the reproach of Crypto-pantheism, implied in the argument of Schweizer, abolishes the distinction, so vital to any consistent maintenance of the doctrines of grace, between the efficient and permissive decrees of God. The moderate Calvinists—who have seen the prominence which the Scriptures everywhere give to human agency, especially in the matter of sin; who have felt in their own souls that there were thoughts, words and deeds, states and affections of soul, which were truly theirs, which began in the will as the immediate cause—have been compelled to admit that there is a sphere in which God leaves personal agents to themselves, and in which they are permitted to act as real efficient causes. So in innocence Adam was left to the freedom of his will. This field is not beyond His providence; there are limits to the permission, and every act that takes place in it is made to play its

part in the whole economy of the Divine dispensations, and is ordered and overruled for the accomplishment of His ends. The Divine ordination in this sphere of liberty does not impinge upon the creature's efficiency; he is the author of the deeds. How this can be—that is, how we can reconcile an universal and absolute decree with this causative power in the creature—is a question perhaps of insuperable difficulty, but what question is there touching the relations of the infinite and finite which does not transcend our capacities? Both doctrines are revealed, and both are evident to reason and consciousness, and we should accordingly accept both, and wait for a higher form of knowledge for the solution of the mystery. We should give to God the glory of His supremacy; we should not deny to the creature the properties that God has bestowed. We should not be afraid to say, My act, or My thought, or My feeling, because whatever is positive or real in these functions should be ascribed only to God. They are ours by a power which God imparted to us, and every abuse of these faculties is an act which must be ascribed in all its relations to the will of the creature, and the creature alone. When Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, or when a sinner now blasphemes God and sheds the innocent blood of his neighbour, God does not move him to these acts. They are, in no proper sense, from God; they are his own, and if he is moved to them, he is moved to them only by himself or the Devil.

On these grounds we are constrained to dissent from the theory which resolves sin into privation and all sinfulness into an empty abstraction. While there is privation in every sin, there is something more; there is a real and positive potency to mischief. It is a power, as holiness is a power, but a power working to disorder, confusion and death. It is not simply the absence of beauty; it is the presence of deformity; not simply the unlovely, but the positively hateful; not simply the want of order, but real disorder. As we have seen that righteousness expresses objectively the

Sin is not mere privation.

qualities which constitute the good, and holiness the subjective state which apprehends them in all their manifestations as good, so sin must be taken in a corresponding sense as denoting the qualities opposed to righteousness—the bad, the unjust, and the state which embraces and inclines to these qualities. In the first sense, it is applicable to actions or failures to act, and indicates that they want the property of rectitude or are positively contradictory to law; they are wrong or cruel or unjust. In the second sense, it indicates habits and dispositions of the soul which either fail to apprehend and delight in the right as also the good, or which positively take pleasure in and exalt to the place of the good other objects which in that relation are not good at all. Man must have a good; he must love something, and as holiness loves God, so sin loves the personal creature itself.

Moral distinctions not exclusively subjective,

We must guard against the error of making moral distinctions exclusively subjective. We have seen that God, as object to Himself, is the standard of perfect righteousness, and that consequently whatever is in harmony with the Divine nature is, on that account, righteous; that God, as subject, contemplates His own perfections with infinite complacency and delight; and that this infinite love to His own infinite righteousness constitutes the Divine holiness. In the same way, holiness in man is that subjective state which takes delight in the good as an objective quality, which loves God supremely for His righteousness, and loves whatever is accordant with the character of God. Unless this distinction is maintained we annihilate the moral differences of actions. Everything will depend upon the motive; if that is good the deed, no matter how disastrous or revolting, is to be accepted as right. There must, therefore, be admitted an objective rectitude which distinguishes the love that we denominate holiness from every other love. On the same ground there must be maintained an objective quality in sin, either privative or positive, and in the subjective state which can choose the things defiled by this quality without

being revolted or disgusted. The sin may be in the act as well as in the motive. True holiness loves only the really good—that is, the really right. The love of anything else under the disguise of right is the counterfeit of holiness, and not the Divine reality. The love to a thing that is not right, whether its unrighteousness be the ground of the love or not, is sin, because a holy being would instantly recoil from what was contradictory to the good. To constitute sin it is not required that a man should actually mean to do wrong. The probability is that the deliberate choice of evil as evil, or the making of it, because it is evil, the good of the soul, is a degree of wickedness very seldom reached by men in this world. That is the characteristic of lost spirits in the world of woe. It is enough that a thing is embraced as a good notwithstanding it is evil; that the heart can cleave to it while it is abominable to God and destructive of the comeliness and beauty of our own natures.

and sin may be in the act as well as the motive.

As a nature which manifests itself in supreme love to the supreme good is the bond of unity in a holy life, the question arises, What is the principle of unity in the life of sin? Is there any common ground in which all the corrupt habits and dispositions of the sinner meet and from which they proceed? Or are they to be considered as so many broken and detached fragments, which have no coherence but their common subjective relation to one and the same person? Is the sinner, in the absence of the uniting principle of holiness, to be considered as the victim of impulses, successively excited by the objects which present themselves in the course of his experience? Or is there something within him which answers to the stability and fixedness of character? Is there a sinful as there is a holy nature, in the sense in which *nature* has already been defined? It is not a satisfactory answer to this question to say that a state of sin, subjectively considered, is illustrated by the analogy of death. Nothing more can be extracted from this

Is there any principle of unity in the life of sin? And what is it?

term, taken alone, than the absence of life. It implies the removal of all those forces and energies which belonged to the living being—but nothing more, *ex vi termini*. But there are other expressions which teach, very distinctly, that there is such a unity in sin. The carnal mind is said to be enmity against God; sinners are represented as the enemies of God; and the notion of redemption as implying reconciliation presupposes an attitude of hostility in which the parties stand to each other. Now, enmity is not simply the absence of love—a condition of mere indifference; it is a principle of repugnance, of active opposition, of open and decided resistance. It implies that there is in man and in every sinner a generic disposition which determines all his volitions and habits, and determines them in positive contradiction to the Divine will. The moral life of sin turns upon the single point of opposition to God. Here, all forms of sin, however various and inconsistent in other respects, centre and harmonize. "Its proper formal object," says Owen,[1] "is God; it is enmity against God. . . . . It hath, as it were, that command from Satan which the Assyrians had from their king: 'Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.' It is neither great nor small, but God Himself, the King of Israel, that sin sets itself against. There lies the secret, formal reason of all its opposition to good, even because it relates unto God. May a road, a trade, a way of duties be set up, where communion with God is not aimed at, but only the duty itself, as is the manner of men in most of their superstitious worship; the opposition that will lie against it from the law of sin will be very weak, easy and gentle. Or, as the Assyrians, because of his show of a king, assaulted Jehoshaphat, but when they found it was not Ahab, turned back from pursuing him; because there is a show and appearance of the worship of God, sin may make head against it at first, but when the duty cries out in the heart, that, indeed, God is not there,

It is opposition to God;

[1] Indwell. Sin, chap. iv.

sin turns away to seek out its proper enemy, even God Himself, elsewhere. The law of sin makes not opposition to any duty, but to God in every duty." If now the formal nature of sin is enmity against God—and such it must be if sin is not only the negation but the positive contrast of holiness—this enmity must, first of all, manifest itself in the denial or repudiation of that fundamental relation of absolute dependence which essentially characterizes the creature. The subject manifests his enmity to his prince by striking at the root of his authority and committing treason against his sovereignty. The sinner, in like manner, strikes at the very root of the Divine jurisdiction over him, and sets up for himself. He will not have God to reign over him, but is resolved to be his own master. He denies God to affirm himself. The claims of God are always those of a rival, and always provoke his opposition and rebellion. Hence, self, as the rival and the enemy of God, becomes the ruling principle of sin, and collects together all the threads of the complicated and various life of the sinner into the single web of treason against the absolute sovereignty of God.

it repudiates His authority;

and it commits treason against His sovereignty.

From this qualitative consideration of good and evil we are conducted to the same results in relation to the nature of sin which we have previously reached from an estimate of its objective and subjective aspects in relation to the law. It was there shown that it is disobedience to God, as the law is only an authoritative expression of the will of God; it has been here shown that the law is also a revelation of the nature of God as infinitely righteous and just, and consequently sin must stand not only in opposition to His will, but in equal opposition to His being and His glory. It was there shown that the inward principle which prompts a man to violate or come short of the glory of God is the virtual denial of his real position as a creature, and the practical assumption of an attitude of independence and self-sufficiency which re-

The same results reached as before,

nounces all the rights of the Creator—self-seeking in the place of God-seeking. It has here been shown that the formal principle of sin is enmity against God—an attitude of hostility to His nature, His being and His law; and enmity can only be conceived as manifested in throwing off its allegiance and claiming to be its own master. From every point of view, therefore, we are conducted to substantially the same conclusion; and that conclusion presents sin in an aspect which should make every reflecting being shudder. The notion of a creature, whose being is a gift, setting itself up against the great God, and assuming a position of open and undisguised enmity, is surely enough to fill our minds with horror and dismay. Sin stands revealed in awful malignity as a profane attempt to dethrone the Most High and to exalt ourselves to His glory and sovereignty. Whilst it strikes at God, it recoils upon ourselves, and in separating us from the source of all real and solid good, it robs our souls of their native beauty and excellence, pollutes them in every faculty with foul deformity, and makes them a hideous and ghastly spectacle—a loathsome and putrid mass to all intelligent beings that have retained their integrity. In our present condition we can form no adequate conception of how utterly despicable sin is; much less can we conceive its fearful tendencies to mischief and anarchy and ruin. To strike the sun from the heavens, and to break the stars loose from the influence of the forces which now retain them in their orbits, to set every planet rushing wildly and darkly through space and bring ten thousand worlds in furious collision, are but slight matters compared with that havoc which sin seeks to make in the moral universe in seeking to expel God from the supremacy; to break the forces which now hold angels and men in harmony, peace and order from their common subjection to Him; and to make every creature that has a will the mortal enemy or the remorseless tyrant of every other rational being. In this world the tendencies of sin are constantly repressed and checked. It is never

and sin is seen to be enmity against God.

permitted to exist in full and complete development. It is ever mingled with the good in the form of the right, where it does not recognize the right as being the divinely good. It is never found as completed enmity to God, when every fragment of the law is effaced from the conscience and the soul stands as the embodiment of selfishness and hate. Were this consummation realized, the earth would vomit out its inhabitants as being unable to endure their abominations. Such a condition of things will be found in hell. There sin will have its perfect work. There will be anarchy. There will be a state utterly and for ever intolerable. The single statement that the native tendency of sin is to destroy God, and instead of a will infinitely wise and just and holy, to enthrone millions of wills in selfish isolation and in deadly hostility, gives us a clue to the chapter of horrors which sin would inevitably work out in the universe if it were permitted to realize its own inborn instincts. Well may it be called the abominable thing which God hates. It is a marvel of patience that He can bear with the transgressor a single instant—a marvel of love, an incomprehensible mystery of grace, that He should ever forgive it, and much more that He should raise traitors to the dignity and glory of sons. How wonderful are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!

III. In the foregoing discussion concerning the nature of sin, while it has all along been tacitly assumed that a rational, intelligent being is the only subject that is capable of it, the precise conditions of responsibility have not been articulately stated. From the analysis of holiness it evidently demands all the higher faculties of our nature; it is the consummation in living unity of intelligence, reason, conscience and taste. Sin, on the other hand, is the perversion of all. But in what relation do holiness and sin stand to the will? And how far does the question of power condition the reality of guilt or righteousness? Are we prepared to say that no action is good which has not been done with the

The relation of holiness and sin to the will.

free consent of the agent, and that no action is bad which it was not in his power to have avoided? As to the first question, little need be added to what has already been said. The love of righteousness is indispensable to works of righteousness, and any acts, however just and proper in themselves, which have not been performed under the influence of this love, are destitute of moral worth. But are the acts and habits which a sinner finds to be beyond the control of his will stripped of their sinfulness by the circumstance of his inability? Here a distinction must be made. We must distinguish between inability as original and inability as penal. Moral power is nothing more nor less than holy habitudes and dispositions; it is the perception of the beauty and the response of the heart to the excellence and glory of God, and the consequent subjection of the will to the law of holy love. Spiritual perception, spiritual delight, spiritual choice, these and these alone constitute ability to good. Now, if we could conceive that God had made a creature destitute of these habits, if we could conceive that he came from the hands of the Creator in the same moral condition in which our race is now born, it is impossible to vindicate the obligation of such a creature to holiness upon any principle of justice. It is idle to say that his inability is but the intensity of his sin, and the more helpless the more wicked. His inability is the result of his constitution; it belongs to his very nature as a creature, and he is no more responsible for such defects than a lame man is responsible for his hobbling gait or a blind man for his incompetency to distinguish colours. He is what God made him; he answers to the idea of his being, and is no more blameworthy for the deformed condition of his soul than a camel for the deformity of its back. The principle is intuitively evident that no creature can be required to transcend its powers. Ability conditions responsibility. An original inability, natural in the sense that it enters into the notion of the creature as such, completely obliterates all moral distinc-

Inability original and inability penal.

tions with reference to the acts and habits embraced within its sphere. And if this had been what the advocates of natural ability meant, their position would have been impregnable. But this is not what they mean; they do not represent the natural as that which pertains to the idea and original state of the creature. In this sense, moral and natural ability are not distinguished as separate species, but the moral is the natural ability; the moral habits are the very things by which a moral creature possesses any ability to do good at all. They contend, on the other hand, that there may be the entire absence of all holy principles, of all spiritual discernment and love, and yet that the creature thus destitute of these may be possessed of a power of another kind to do good, upon which his responsibility is conditioned. Upon their hypothesis it is conceivable that a man may be originally corrupt as a creature, and yet under obligation to keep the perfect law of God. Their ability when narrowly examined turns out to be a mere play with the ambiguity of language, or the denial in one form of what they have affirmed in another. Sometimes it is represented as the mere possession of the faculties and attributes of reason, intelligence and will, abstracted from any determinate states in relation to holiness or sin. A being thus existing *in puris naturalibus* we have already seen to involve an absurdity; its very attitude of indeterminateness to good would be sin. It is precisely in the character of its determinations, and of them alone, that its good and evil consist. At other times it is represented as an inherent power of the will to choose either good or evil. But to choose good without loving it is not holiness, and unless the will can directly produce the spiritual perception of the beauty, and the spiritual delight in the excellence of the good, its choice is utterly worthless. It is the blind fumbling in the dark; though he may chance to be walking among jewels, they are nothing more to him than charcoal or dung. The most offensive form in which this doctrine of natural ability has

What is really meant by the advocates of natural ability.

been stated is that in which it is said that every act of will is determined by the personal relations of the good to ourselves, and that although we may not choose God because we love Him and delight in Him, we may choose Him because His favour is our highest interest; that this act of choice, on account of the nature of its object, is holy, and will ultimately lead to spiritual habits and perceptions. This is really to make sin the minister of holiness, and that selfishness which is the very essence of rebellion the productive cause of righteousness.

These distinctions and evasions show conclusively that the natural ability which I make essential to responsibility is a very different thing from that which many divines have invented as the condition on which man is responsible since the fall.

Man's inability the result of choice.

But there is another, a penal inability. It is that which man has superinduced by his own voluntary transgression. He was naturally able—that is, created with all the habitudes and dispositions which were involved in the loving choice of the good. Rectitude was infused into his nature; it entered into the idea of his being; he was fully competent for every exaction of the law. He chooses sin, and by that very act of choice impregnates his nature with contrary habits and dispositions. His moral agency continues unimpaired through all his subsequent existence. He becomes a slave to sin, but his impotence, hopeless and ruinous as it is, results from his own free choice. In the loss of habits he loses all real power for good; he becomes competent for nothing but sin; but he is held responsible for the nature which God gave him, and the law which constitutes its eternal norm according to the Divine idea and the spontaneous dictates of his own reason can never cease to be the standard of his being and life. All his descendants were in him when he sinned and fell. His act was legally theirs, and that depravity which he infused into his own nature in the place of original righteousness, has become

their inheritance. They stand, therefore, from the first moment of their being, in the same relation to the law which he occupied at his fall. Their impotence is properly their own. Here is not the place to show how this can be. I am only showing that there is a marked distinction between the inability which begins with the nature of a being and the inability which it brings upon itself by sin; that in the one case responsibility is measured by the extent of the actual power possessed, in the other by the extent of the power originally imparted. No subject by becoming a traitor can forfeit the obligation to allegiance; no man can escape from the law by voluntary opposition to law. The more helpless a creature becomes in this aspect of the case, the more wicked; the more he recedes from the Divine idea, from the true norm of his being, the more guilty and the more miserable. To creatures in a state of apostasy actual ability is not, therefore, the measure of obligation. They cannot excuse themselves under the plea of impotency when that very impotence is the thing charged upon them. For what is their impotence but the presence of vicious and corrupt habits? That was the very thing forbidden to them, and their having disregarded the prohibition when they were fully able to comply with it is the *gravamen* of their offence.

Two facts of every sinner's consciousness.

The consciousness of every sinful being contains two facts, which, however difficult to reconcile with each other, beautifully harmonize with the teaching of the Scriptures. The *first* is the conviction that I might have been different—that my nature has been perverted and abused. This consciousness of having had the power to be otherwise is the groundswell of man's original condition. It is not implied in it that there is a present possession of power, but only that this power belongs to the idea of our natures as rational and intelligent and as creatures of God. Philosophers, finding this consciousness in every guilty soul, have construed it into a declaration of present ability, but it is the consciousness of

Adam passing over into the bondage of the fall. It is an echo which God awakes and keeps alive in the soul to its pristine condition. The *second* is that my present state of sin is my own, it is the result of my own folly. These facts of consciousness the understanding sometimes attempts to suppress and smother by sophistical distinctions; by attempts to make our being as a nature begin at our individual birth; by charging upon God our corrupt and crazy constitution; or endeavouring to evade responsibility under the pretext of our present confessed inability. All these subterfuges prove mere refuges of lies. Our consciousness answers from its lowest depths, "You might have been otherwise, and you have made yourselves what you are. God gave you a sound constitution, and you have poisoned it with disease and death. God made you upright, but you have sought out many inventions." Apart from these convictions we cannot conceive of the possibility of a consciousness of sin.

Hence, to us in our present state the question of present ability does not condition the reality of sin. Whatever is contrary to the Divine ideal of man, according to the original constitution of the species, is sin. Our blindness, our hardness of heart, our ignorance of spiritual things so far as the knowledge of them pertained to our primitive condition, all must be imputed as sin. The whole law must be fulfilled; to violate it on any point, no matter on what plea or pretext, is to become a transgressor before God.

LECTURE XV.

THE POLLUTION AND GUILT OF SIN.

THE nature of sin in general having been discussed, the next thing that remains to be considered is those inseparable properties or effects which divines are accustomed to express by the terms *pollution* and *guilt—macula* and *reatus*. Both are personal relations of sin, and though neither constitutes its formality or essence, neither can be detached from its being. Wherever there is sin, there is a stain; and wherever there is a stain, there is guilt. The notion of a stain shows the close connection between the conceptions of the beautiful and the good. This connection is founded in nature; it is recognized in Scripture, and lies at the basis of the ethical value of art. In all languages, as Müller has justly remarked, the same terms are employed "to denote perversion in both the spheres;" and we instinctively feel that there is something of violence and disorder when the loveliness of external beauty is disjoined from the loveliness of internal harmony. The Scriptures constantly speak of the beauty of holiness, the beauty of the Lord our God, and especially of His glory, which is just the splendour or effulgence of His beauty. It is through the sympathy of the beautiful and good that Art is made the minister of moral culture. It awakens the sense of propriety, refines the conception of decency and fitness, and trains us to those impressions of harmony in character which can only be realized through the culture of our moral nature. No representations

Inseparable properties or effects of sin.

Connection of the good and the beautiful,

of sin are more common than those which are derived from this connection. It is the ugly, the monstrous, the deformed, it renders its subjects odious and disgusting; they are foul, filthy, unclean; and the analogy reaches its climax when the Saviour compares them to a cage of unclean birds. It was through the notion of uncleanness particularly that the Levitical ritual educated the people to a just appreciation of its malignity. It was figured in leprosy, the most loathsome disease to which the human frame was subject; it was graphically pictured in a dead body, which, at first shocking, becomes gradually, as the process of putrefaction goes on, intolerably offensive. Wounds, bruises and putrefying sores are familiar similes. The connection, indeed, of the two notions of the beautiful and the good, the deformed and the sinful, pervades the moral teaching of both Testaments.

the sinful and the deformed.

It is important to observe, however, that the ground of this connection is ethical and not æsthetic. The first beautiful is the good, and to reverse the order is to pervert our moral culture from the education of principles to the indulgence of mere sensibility. To reduce righteousness to a matter of taste, and to make its regulative authority depend upon its appeal to our æsthetic sentiments, is to inflict a fatal blow upon the proper consciousness of right, and to make holiness amount to nothing but a refined imagination. The æsthetic sentiment should be regarded as a reflection from the moral sphere; a transfer to the sensational world of those perceptions which are found in their purity only in the region of the spiritual and divine. It is as nature and art imitate the harmony, loveliness and glory of the truly good, that they become the truly beautiful. The charms of sense are but feeble echoes of the bliss of spirit; the melody of sounds a faint echo of the higher music of the soul. There is a first perfect and first fair; and these coincide with the first good, and from it must take their measures and significancy. This supremacy of the moral sentiments must be maintained in order to give

Ethical, not æsthetic.

health and consistency to the pleasures of taste; they are apt to evaporate into a sickly and morbid sentimentalism unless braced and invigorated by clear, moral perceptions.

Sin is the real and original *ugly*.

In conformity, therefore, with this mode of representation, sin is the really and originally ugly, and nothing is ugly except in consequence of its analogies to sin. But *deformity, uncleanness, filth,* and such like expressions, indicate not only a property of sin objectively considered, but they imply rather the effect which it produces upon its subjects. It leaves the impress of its odious features behind it. Wherever it touches it leaves its slime; wherever it is permitted to lodge it leaves its likeness. It makes the soul the reflection of its own deformity. The man becomes filthy, odious, abominable. This power of sin to mutilate the soul, to deprive it of the harmony of its proportions, to spoil it of all moral beauty and to make it hateful and disgusting, is what is meant by its polluting power.

What is meant by its polluting power.

The ugliness which it creates is its blot or stain. It is a great mistake to suppose that even transient acts of sin pass from the soul and leave it as they found it. They always impress it with a tendency to reproduce themselves. They give it a determinate bias to the repetition of the same kind of acts. They leave their image in the very mould of the moral nature. Besides the tendency to generate themselves, which by repetition grows into a fixed habit, they derange the whole structure of the soul and put it out of joint for all that is good. They pervade the entire man like a disease, which, however it may at first affect a single organ, soon spreads through all the parts of the body. Habits of sin are all so many blots or stains, and when there is a general habitude to sin it is like an universal ulcer. Such is the condition to which the sinner is brought. He is morally ulcerated from head to foot; he is one universal mass of gangrenous matter. No holy being can look at him without disgust. He is covered with filth, and repels all approach of the pure

and good by his shocking outrages upon all that is decent and comely.

Sin as the vile and mean makes ashamed.

The sentiment which is proper to sin, considered as the vile, the ugly, the dirty or the mean, is that of shame. It is the feeling that we are justly exposed to contempt—that we are fit for nothing but to be despised. The man who is conscious of sin in this relation feels that he is degraded—degraded in his own eyes and in the eyes of all who are competent to judge. His pride fails to sustain him, for its very food is gone; his self-respect vanishes before the withering revelation of his baseness. As the emotions of both honour and shame depend upon the opinion of others, it is necessary, in order to a full elucidation of the filthiness of sin, to explain the nature of that nice sensibility to character or the estimation in which we are held by others which gives to their opinions the power to strengthen or annoy. No part of our constitution has attracted more general attention, or been investigated with less accuracy and philosophical discrimination, and no part of our constitution contains a clearer revelation of the moral character of God, or a clearer instance of a moral administration carried on in the present life. Bishop Butler was aware of the significance of the topic, and the brief hints which he has thrown out are pregnant with meaning. The fact is indisputable: God has made our hearts almost as responsive to the sentiments of others as we are to our own. Their censures distress us, their praises elate us, their approbation is a spring of serenity and peace. We enjoy their smiles, we dread their frowns. Hence arises the proverbial power of public opinion, and the power of concentrated opinion in any club or society, however small. The individual quails before the mass, or derives new courage and zeal from the cheers and congratulations of those around him and with whom he is united. But opinion, though it may mortify and distress, never really degrades a man until it accords with his own innate

Explanation of our sensibility to the opinions of others.

sense of unworthiness and meanness. It is only when it is the echo of the secret judgment of his own soul that he cowers before it, and is unable to hold up his head for shame and confusion of face. On the other hand, he is rather rebuked by his own inward nature when he yields to it in contradiction to the dictates of his own conscience. He feels it to be noble, and the world acknowledges it to be heroic, to stand out against the multitude when he is persuaded that the multitude is wrong. The sublimest instances of virtue are those in which good men have braved popular prejudice and popular fury, and dared to be right amid storms of calumny and denunciation. It is clear, then, that opinion was designed to have force only as it represents the judgment of truth and righteousness. It is the consciences of others that must condemn us before their censures can really harm us. It has obviously been the aim of God to fortify our own moral sentiments by those of our fellow-men—to make each man's conscience operate through opinion upon the conscience of every other. In this way society strengthens virtue, the approbation of society being a sanction of the same kind, and as powerful, in vindication of integrity as the approbation of our own hearts. The sentiments of honour and shame lend new support to the sentiment of right, and impart a new sting to the horrors of remorse. Now, it is a singular circumstance that our own moral natures never become fully alive to the baseness of sin as long as we can fancy it concealed. We may recognize ourselves as shameworthy, but we turn away from the spectacle of our own meanness until it has been exposed to the gaze of others. Detection removes all masks and evasions, and as it brings public sentiment upon the offender in concurrence with his own inward condemnation of himself, the sense of shame becomes insupportable if the transgression has been flagrantly disgraceful. So intense is the agony under these circumstances that the strongest passions of human nature are not unfrequently subdued by it, and the most powerful impulses held in absolute abey-

ance. The virgin who has lost her chastity will overcome the mightiest instinct of a mother's heart, love for her own offspring, and make way with the child of her infamy and guilt that she may screen her crime from exposure and escape the withering scowl of shame. She maintains the struggle against herself as long as it is confined to her own bosom, but she knows that she must yield and forfeit the last remnant of self-respect the very moment her wickedness is brought out into light. The scowl of society, the finger of scorn, the contempt of the virtuous and pure,—these are tortures which our sensibility to the opinion of others, when we know that opinion to be just, connects with the baseness of crime, and tortures against which no fortitude can effectually steel the heart. It is the reaction of the pollution of sin upon the sinner's own soul. The light of opinion reveals the enormity of the case, as the sun shines upon sinks of filth, and lays bare their loathsomeness. This pollution, as it constantly increases with the increasing power of evil, will be a perpetual source of torture throughout the endless duration of the soul. The wicked, we are told, shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt. In the morning of the resurrection they will be presented before the bar of God in dreadful contrast with the pure, the holy and the good. They will feel that they are degraded; that they have disgraced their nature; that they are utterly mean and vile, and unable to hold up their heads for shame and confusion of face; they will be ready to slink away like a dog detected in what he knows will provoke the scorn of his master. Men prate of their honour now, and swell with conceit of their dignity and beauty, but every sinner then will be deeply conscious that his honour is lost, that infamy is his lot, and that everlasting scorn and contempt must be poured upon him from the throne of God and the general assembly of the just. Sin is vile, it is disgraceful and degrading, but sinners in this world shun exposure and keep one another in counte-

Everlasting contempt a perpetual source of torture to the wicked.

nance by lowering the standard of public reprobation. Hereafter, the shame of their nakedness will be made to appear, and under the withering agony of mortification and disgrace they would account it a privilege to die.

The shame of sin like no other shame.

When we compare the sense of shame which accompanies moral degradation with that which accompanies every other species of indecency, we see at once that there is a marked difference. Deformity of any kind is apt to be mortifying; but the mortification which we experience in consequence of a disfigured limb, a distorted countenance or a hobbling gait is not to be confounded with that shame which we experience when detected in a mean and dirty act. Physical ugliness may be offensive, but it inspires no such emotions as those which are excited by moral obliquity. In this case, shame borrows a shade from another element—it easily glides into remorse. The peculiarity of moral excellence is, that it is felt to be intrinsically worthy of reward; of moral evil, that it is felt to be intrinsically worthy of punishment. The elements of good and ill desert condition every moral cognition, and impart the peculiarities which belong to moral beauty and deformity. The stain of sin is a stain *sui generis*—it cannot be washed out by tears or removed by penances; it has that about it which demands the interposition of a judge and the hand of the executioner. It has put the transgressor in a relation to law and justice which, as his own conscience assures him, makes him the righteous victim of death. This property of sin, which is inseparable from its nature, and which makes its stain so peculiar and so fatal, is one which particularly demands our investigation. It is called *guilt*, and is the connecting link between the crime and its punishment. It is commonly divided into *potential* and *actual*.[1] Potential guilt is only

Glides into remorse.

[1] [Guilt is commonly represented as the obligation to punishment arising from the ill desert of sin; and as this obligation may be either moral, springing from the inherent righteousness of the case, or judicial, springing from the sentence of the law, divines are accustomed to re-

another name for the intrinsic ill desert of sin; it expresses its punishableness, or, what is the same thing, the punishableness of the sinner on account of it. Wherever the stain of sin adheres to any being, it carries along with it this exposure to righteous condemnation. He who has the blot deserves to die. Actual guilt is the same as condemnation—it is the sentence of a judge dooming the man to death. Of course, it presupposes guilt in the former sense; a man must be punishable before he can be condemned. In ordinary language, guilt is probably taken, for the most part, in the first sense. It is used to denote the notion that an individual

Guilt, potential and actual.

solve guilt into two determinations—potential and actual. Potential guilt is only another name for the intrinsic ill desert of sin. Actual guilt is actual condemnation, or the positive ordination to punishment in conformity with the sanction of the law. Potential guilt is the moral necessity of punishment—*dignitas pœnæ;* actual guilt is the judicial necessity of punishment—*obligatio ad pœnam.* It seems to me, however, that the potential is the only real guilt; and that the actual is not so much guilt as the consequence of guilt. The sentence makes no man guilty—it only presupposes that he is so. Guilt is the ground and not the essence of condemnation. I should therefore restrict the proper notion of guilt to the moral necessity of punishment arising from the ill desert of sin. It is that which justly exposes a man to punishment—the righteous and formal ground of it. He is guilty who deserves to be condemned, whether he is actually condemned or not. This is the sense in which the word is universally employed in human tribunals. Every criminal prosecution aims first to ascertain the guilt of the accused—that is, his *dignitas pœnæ;* and then the sentence is pronounced according to the facts of the case. At the Divine tribunal it must be admitted that the two things always coincide. With God *dignitas pœnæ* and *obligatio ad pœnam* are but the same thing, as Owen observes, in divers words. To be worthy of death and to be doomed to death are always inseparable; and though the logical distinction betwixt them still holds as a matter of thought, yet as a matter of fact they can never be sundered. In the manifestation of guilt through the conscience, both are given in one and the same operation, so that the feeling of ill desert and the feeling of condemnation blend into perfect unity. In consequence of this necessary connection, the two determinations of divines may be retained without injury, though the language is unfortunate in which they are expressed. It is certainly incongruous to represent that as only potential, only in the way of becoming guilt, which is the very essence of the thing, and without which the actual is mere tyranny.]

has really perpetrated an offence, and is justly obnoxious to punishment on account of it. It is only in theological language that the actual subjection to the sentence of condemnation is expressed in terms of guilt: "He is guilty of death."

The mode in which the sense of guilt manifests itself is through the feeling of remorse—the most painful and excruciating (especially when mingled, as it always is, with the sense of shame) that the human bosom is capable of enduring.

Remorse, or the sense of guilt, has two ingredients: first, the conviction that sin ought to be punished;

It is always occasioned by reflection upon the wickedness of conduct. It is the sentence of condemnation which we pass upon ourselves for having acted or being in a state contradictory to rectitude. There are obviously two ingredients which enter into this cup of bitterness. There is first the conviction—the prime element of guilt—of ill desert. We feel, not only that we have done wrong, that we have departed from a rule, and that we are what we ought not to be, but that our transgressions deserve punishment. It is the conviction of this intrinsic ill desert of sin that lies at the foundation of all penal statutes and civil executions. This makes us contemplate crime as a punishable thing. We make a distinction betwixt the excesses of the maniac and the excesses of those who are in full possession of their faculties. The lunatic takes away life by an act of violence—his act does not reflect itself upon his own soul either as a stain or as guilt. It leaves no trace of itself. We never think of stigmatizing it as murder, or the agent as a criminal. We may confine him on principles of prudence and precaution, and deprive him of all instruments and opportunities of mischief; but his restraint is no more a punishment than the caging of a wild beast to prevent him from doing mischief. The reason is, we associate no feelings of demerit or ill desert with his actions, however violent or hurtful. He is neither felt to be nor treated as responsible. That the sense of ill desert is painful and distressing, those need not be reminded who have ever experienced in their

own souls what it is to be conscious that they are worthless. It is the convict's feeling, whose heart tells him that he has forfeited his position in society, and is no longer entitled to enjoy the rights and privileges which pertain to other men. No man under its influence can raise his head or walk at ease among his fellows, or enjoy the goods of life. He feels —he cannot but feel—that sin brands him as an outcast, and that he has lost his title to the ordinary lot of humanity. Like the ancient leper, he must stand aloof from the contact of other men, and with the symbols of his degradation about him constantly exclaim, "Unclean! unclean!"

In the next place, remorse involves a fearful looking-for of judgment arising from the condemning sentence which we are constrained to pass upon ourselves. The sense of demerit, or the conviction that sin ought to be punished, necessarily gives rise to the still more painful conviction that sin will be punished. "For wickedness condemned by her own witness is very timorous, and being pressed with conscience always forecasteth grievous things." Bishop Butler has conclusively shown that the operations of our moral nature involve a promise not only implied, but express, on the part of God of reward to the obedient and a corresponding threat of punishment to the guilty. There is in the bosom of every transgressor a trembling apprehension of future judgment, and so clear and definite is the reference of conscience to the awards of a higher tribunal, that the best and wisest philosophers have not scrupled to assert the absolute impossibility of atheism as long as this faculty continues to exert its power in the breast. It is a witness for God and a witness for retributive justice which sophistry and philosophy, falsely so called, find it impossible to bribe or silence. It deserves to be remarked, however, that the dread of punishment is one thing and the punishment itself another. There is in remorse, as in all fear, torment, but it is not the torment of the actual infliction of the penalty of the law; it is the agony which, in a nature like ours, anticipated evils

second, the conviction that sin will be punished.

are fitted to produce. Conscience condemns us in God's name, and it is the awful shadows of God's wrath projected beforehand upon the soul which fill it with consternation and terror. That wrath is yet to be revealed. Conscience is not the curse, but its sure forerunner. It is the expectation of death, and the expectation of death distinctly because it is felt to be deserved.

The other element of guilt involved here; and guilt in the conscience is God's present sentence of death.

This expectation obviously involves in it the other element of guilt, actual condemnation, or obnoxiousness to punishment. The revelation of the punishment as a thing that shall certainly take place is a present sentence of death. The sinner fears because he feels that he is already condemned. He is already under the judicial displeasure of God. The decree has gone forth against him. Conscience manifests its terrible reality in the depths of his soul, and because he knows from the intrinsic demerit which sin has reflected upon him that it will and must be executed, he is filled with consternation and dread.

The connection betwixt the manifestation of guilt in the conscience and the punitive justice of God has already been pointed out in the illustration of the nature of moral government. It can only be evaded by misrepresenting the phenomena of remorse. To apprehend clearly the fundamental notion of demerit is to recognize not only the certainty but the necessity[1] of punishment in contradistinction

[1] [The truth is, the inexorable necessity of the penal imperative is just as remarkable as the absolute authority of the precept. It is admitted on all hands that the obligation to obedience is unconditional and supreme; nothing can dispense with it, nothing can absolve from it. The law addresses itself to the will in a categorical imperative which receives no excuses, accepts no apologies, and listens to no pleas or evasions in behalf of disobedience. The claims of duty are paramount and supreme. No man, under any circumstances or under any pretext, is at liberty to do wrong. But the law is not more unconditional in its commands than in its threatenings. The moral necessity of the precept is sustained by the moral necessity of the sanction. The obligation to obey is not more absolute than the obligation to suffer in case of disobedience. They are the counterparts of each other, and it is through their inviola-

from all forms of disciplinary suffering. Penal justice does not aim at the reformation of the offender, but it asserts the awful inviolability of the moral law by the terrible wretchedness with which it reacts upon the soul of the offender. It is the recoil of that law upon the person of him who had the audacity to resist it, and no surer sign of moral degeneracy can be found among a people than a sickly fastidiousness in relation to the demands of justice. The following remarks of Müller in his great work on sin[1] have as much significancy for us as for his own countrymen:

Scruples about capital punishment always a sign of moral degeneracy.

"According to the moral necessity of punishment here recognized, we must regard it as one of the most decided symptoms of a deadly disease

Müller quoted.

ble relation that the equilibrium of the Divine government is maintained. The necessity of punishment, therefore, is as inexorable as the necessity of obedience. An unconditional dispensation with the penalty is no less a flagrant breach of justice than a dispensation with the precept. It is as wicked to say to the sinner, "Thou shalt not die," as to say to him, "Thou art at liberty to sin." Hence, punishment, in the ground of it, is not a matter of choice. It is not a thing which God may institute or abolish at will without reflecting on his glory. It is a thing that He must do, or cease to be the holy and just God. Many lose the formal notion of justice by confounding it with discipline. They look upon it as designed to ameliorate and reform the offender, a species of education in which he is led away from sin to the love and practice of holiness. This is a great error. The end of punishment is to uphold the majesty of law. It seeks not to remove the offence, nor to change the personal character of the offender, but to express the intrinsic ill desert of the sin by the terrible rebound with which it recoils on the sinner in the form of suffering. It is a satisfaction to law, and can no more be separated from the notion of ill desert than duty can be separated from the notion of right. It is this sense of the inexorable necessity of the penal imperative that makes the sinner tremble. He sees that he *must* die, that the idea of an unconditional pardon is self-contradictory, that there is no hope without an adequate satisfaction, and of that nature gives no clear intimation.

One of the worst signs of the times is the slender hold which the idea of punitive justice has upon the public mind. Moral order cannot be preserved without it, and it is a fatal symptom that a nation is tending to anarchy when it becomes indifferent to the first principle of prosperity.]

[1] Vol. i., p. 267.

which gnaws at the heart of our national life, that our people, at least in so far as it is represented by the prevalent opinions of our educated classes, no longer earnestly believe the *character* of sin and crime to be that which *deserves punishment*. Whoever gives his attention to the discussions of our representative assemblies concerning capital punishment, political crime, civil offence, and the like, will everywhere find this dissipation of the moral consciousness to be the fundamental feature. No one is more sure of the applause of the majority than he who discovers some new means (under the protest of humanity, and of the participation of the legislature and even of the judge in human weakness and the like) of disarming justice and of making the scoundrel and villain unpunishable before the law, and, where possible, before public opinion too. The first form which this moral rottenness theoretically assumes is commonly that of a coarse or more cultivated doctrine of determinism. The actor is not the author of his act, but the circumstances, or the bad education, or the deficiency in social arrangements, which should make it easy for him to procure without resorting to crime the necessary means of subsistence. Crime is misfortune, not guilt, and then, of course, naturally enough, it appears very unjust to visit him who has been so unfortunate as to assassinate some one, with 'the greater evil of his death.' Amongst those who think more deeply we then meet with the real consequences of this opinion in a decided moral skepticism, to which the moral law is only matter of arbitrary invention and social agreement. Here, too, the old rule holds good that he who has separated himself from God becomes a traitor to his own conscience. From the stagnant pool of moral corruption which the recent revolution discovered to us, there is no outlet for our nation until it has learned penitentially again to bow down to the earnest majesty of the Divine law. It is rather genuine humanity to recognize in the moral judgment of one who, deeply sunk in crime (for example, the murderer), places himself in the hands of justice with the

consciousness of having forfeited his life with respect to both natural and legal rights, that he stands incomparably higher than the legislator or judge who will not pass the sentence of death upon him, because he is only to be pitied, not to be punished. The former has assaulted the law, but he is readily willing to make for the greatest violation the greatest satisfaction which he as a member of human society is able to make; this latter destroys altogether, so far as he is able, the authority of the law."

From the account which has been given of the sense of guilt, it seems to imply two propositions, which are sometimes represented as peculiar to the Christian revelation, but which a more careful examination shows to be natural to the human mind. The first is, that from the very nature of guilt one sin entails a hopeless bondage to sin. As the law makes no provision for pardon, and as all self-devised satisfactions are felt, in proportion to the degree of moral illumination, to be delusive and worthless, the natural effect of guilt is to widen the breach betwixt the sinner and God. Sensible of the Divine displeasure, he is prone to withdraw farther and farther from the Divine presence. Like Adam, when he hears the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, he seeks to hide himself from the Divine eye. Every augmentation of guilt is an augmentation of his estrangement; the more the sinner sins, the broader is the gulf betwixt him and God. Hence, all experience shows that the native tendency of punishment is to harden. It provokes the malignity of the heart against the law, against the judge, against all holy order. It exasperates the spirit of rebellion to unwonted fierceness, and makes the sinner desperate in sin. The apostle speaks of the law as provoking his secret lusts, instigating the opposition of the heart to God and working in him all manner of concupiscence. The picture which Thucydides draws of the moral effects of the plague at Athens (which the Greek theology taught them to regard as a punishment from heaven, and which their own consciences could

One sin entails hopeless bondage to sin.

not have failed to accept in that light) is a pregnant illustration of the native tendency of guilt when separated from the hope of pardon. "The historian tells us 'that, seeing death so near them, they resolved to make the most of life while it lasted by setting at naught all laws, divine and human, and eagerly plunging into every species of profligacy.' Nor was this conduct by any means confined to the most vile and worthless of the community; for he complains of a general and permanent depravation of morals, which dated its origin from this calamity."[1] If this be so, the first sin must always be the commencement of a career to which there is no limit but the extinction of our being or a marvellous intervention of redeeming grace. He who begins to fall must continue to fall for ever, unless relief be found elsewhere than in himself. To sin once is to be doomed to sin for ever, unless a ransom be found. The inexorable imperative of penal justice puts a gulf betwixt the sinner and God which bars all hope of return. A frown rests upon the face of the judge which repels the transgressor and seals him up in despair. How little do men reflect what an awful thing sin is! How little do they know of its inborn malignity! How feebly conscious of the tremendous fact that it carries death in its very womb!

One sin involves endless punishment.

The other truth is, that as the state into which one sin introduces us is hopeless, the punishment must be endless. If we must continue to sin, we must continue to die. The deeper we plunge in guilt, the deeper we sink in death. This truth seems to be shadowed forth in the very nature of the fear which enters into the constitution of remorse. A guilty conscience dreads the future; it is always looking for a wrath to come. Even in our endless state, when we shall have entered upon the experience of penal fires, there will always be, in the prospective apprehension of guilt, a revelation of still deeper woe. The future will always be blacker than the present—the night ahead more appalling than aught

[1] Thucyd., ii., c. 35. Whately, Prel. Diss., p. 461.

behind. Hell will be thick darkness, waxing blacker and blacker and blacker, for ever!

What a thing must sin be, when the mere sense of guilt, imperfectly revealed as it is in the conscience, is capable of producing such agony! And what a thing must the second death be, when its mere shadows, projected upon our path, are so intolerable! It is true that in the present life the consciousness of guilt is never co-extensive with the reality. Many are thoughtless; many dissipate their moral convictions by sophistical evasions; many are stupid. The moral nature has not been fairly developed. The amount of human guilt collectively, the amount of each man's own personal, individual guilt, is beyond anything that has ever entered into the consciousness of the race. The revelation that is to be made is appalling beyond the power of language to express; and when the roll is unfolded and the reality bursts upon each man's vision, the agony which it will produce, apart from any direct penal inflictions, will be unutterable. How conscience can torment us even here in this land of lies and deceit! Are there not moments in which it rises in majesty, scatters the sophistries of a wicked heart and a duped understanding, and speaks in a language loud as thunder and clear as light in defence of truth, of righteousness and of God? There are times when it makes the sinner tremble in the deepest recesses of his soul; when it peoples his solitude with ministers of vengeance; disturbs his dreams with visions of wrath;—when the fall of a leaf can strike him with horror; when in every shadow he sees a ghost, in every tread he hears an avenger of blood, and in every sound the trump of doom. There is no anguish to be compared with that of remorse. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?

The sense of guilt intolerable now.

There are two circumstances which will distinguish the operations of conscience in the future state, and which must add inconceivably to the horrors it now excites. In the first place,

Two circumstances in the future will add inconceivably to its terrors.

it will act with greater intensity than it does or can act here. The mind will be wound up to the highest pitch of excitement—its chords will be strained to their utmost tension. The energy of the passions and emotions will consequently task the deepest capabilities of the soul. There will be as much intensity of effort, as much condensation of spiritual power in a single exercise, as under ordinary circumstances at present is embodied in a multitude of acts. Conscience, accordingly, will put forth all its vigour; it will bury its whole sting in the heart of its victim. Every pang will be like a death-knell. In the next place, it will have constantly before it, in full and luminous view, all the crimes of the whole life. Here, many are forgotten; many are pronounced to be trivial; many are excused, and the attention is diverted from more; and it is only here and there, upon a few singular, bold and prominent transgressions, that conscience puts forth anything of its fury. But, hereafter, the whole life will be spread out like a map; memory will be quickened to amazing rapidity and accuracy; and the distinctness of recollection will be like a stream of brimstone to feed the flames of remorse. Vice, it should never be forgotten, through the principle of guilt is destined to immortality. Those deeds of darkness which we have forgotten, and which we have vainly hoped are consigned to oblivion, will rise before us in the future world like the ghosts of the murdered, and demand from eternal justice vengeance on our heads. There is nothing secret that shall not be made manifest, nothing buried that shall not be dug up and revived. The whole past must be reproduced; we must confront it face to face and abide the consequences. That rapidity of thought by which the history of years can be compressed into moments—by which, in a single second, months and years may be lived over in their full duration—by which the soul seems to escape from the limits of time, is one of the most mysterious properties of our being. In a

First, it will operate more intensely;

second, it will for ever reproduce the past at every moment.

dream, as we are all conscious, we can cross oceans, traverse continents, encounter numberless perils, and pass through varied scenes of prosperity and suffering; we can seem to experience all the diversified incidents of a long life, and it shall appear long to us at the time, and when we awake the hand may not sensibly have moved upon the face of the dial. There is in man a power to conquer time—it is dimly shadowed in our sleeping hours; but when the future comes we shall then be able to collect all the past in every present and to appropriate much of the future. "I was once told," says De Quincey in a passage quoted by McCosh, "by a near relative of mine, that, having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death but for the critical assistance which reached her, she saw in a moment her whole life in its minutest incidents arranged before her simultaneously, as in a mirror, and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part. This, from some opium experiences of mine, I can believe. I have, indeed, seen the same thing asserted twice in modern books, and accompanied by a remark which I am convinced is true: viz., that the dread book of account of which the Scriptures speak is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual. Of this, at least, I feel assured, that there is no such thing as forgetting possible to the mind. A thousand accidents may and will interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind; accidents of the same sort will also rend away the veil; but alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains for ever, just as the stars seem to withdraw before the common light of day, whereas in fact, as we all know, it is the light which is drawn over them as a veil, and that they are waiting to be revealed when the obscuring daylight shall have been withdrawn."

Dreams.

Drowning.

No such thing as forgetting.

These two circumstances, the intensity with which it will operate and the power to reproduce the entire past in every

moment of the present, will give to remorse in the future world unspeakable power to torment. One shudders to think of it; it will indeed be a worm that never dies, a fire that is never quenched. If the remembrance of a single crime here can drive the criminal to madness, what shall be the distraction of his soul when all his sins shall rise from the grave before him, and the whole scroll of the past visibly and distinctly written be unrolled to his consciousness, overwhelming him with a sense of shame, ill desert and guilt! How shall he feel himself accursed as conscience pursues him with the torch of memory, and forces him to confess, anxious as he may be to deny it, that he is guilty before God! How shall the sense of guilt sink him like lead in the mighty waters! Then in the morning they shall say, Would to God it were even! and at even they shall say, Would to God it were morning! for the fear of their heart wherewith they shall fear and for the sight of their eyes which they shall see. The murderer, we are told, cannot revisit the spot where he perpetrated his deed of blood, for the rushing memories which sweep over his soul. Who can endure the memories that must eternally sweep over the soul of him whom a lifelong guilt stares in the face?

How shall the lost tolerate for ever their own memory?

Such is guilt in its own nature and in its manifestations in the conscience. It is the ill desert of sin and its consequent obnoxiousness to punishment. It is the distinguishing property of sin—nothing else, no other disturbance of our life produces guilt. We may be annoyed with disappointments; we may regret imprudences; we may feel pain and uneasiness at deformity or accidents, but guilt belongs only and exclusively to sin. That always, when reflectively considered, produces the conviction that we are deserving of punishment, and must in the natural course of things receive it. To deny guilt is, therefore, to deny sin in its most essential characteristic, in the very property which distinguishes the cognition of moral turpitude from every other species of deformity. It is to reduce the distinctions of right and

wrong from the lofty elevation of duties and crimes to the low proportions of sentiment and taste.

How the Scriptures represent guilt.

The scriptural representations of guilt are in accordance with the determinations of divines. The ruling idea is that of ill desert—the *potential* guilt, or guilt *in actu primo* of the Schools. The terms expressive of it are also applied to condemnation, or the judicial sentence consequent upon the worthiness of death—the *actual* guilt, or guilt *in actu secundo* of the Schools. In the Old Testament there are various phrases and circumlocutions by which the general notion is conveyed, but the only single words which in the Hebrew correspond to the English term are the derivatives of אָשַׁם, *asham*. The verb, the noun and the adjective are in many passages precisely equivalent to guilt and its derivatives in English. A few examples will suffice to illustrate the usage: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us and we would not hear; therefore, is this distress come upon us."[1] Here was the consciousness of ill desert; their conduct to their brother had been flagrantly wicked, and their consciences led them to connect their present distress as a judicial visitation with their gross and unnatural cruelty. The meaning is, We deserve to die, and therefore are we now suffering. "And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? One of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us."[2] That is, We might have been considered as criminals and treated as worthy of punishment. "Destroy thou them, O God, let them fall by their own counsels."[3] In the Hebrew it is, *Condemn or make them guilty*. The idea is that of the *actual guilt* of the theologians. "Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate."[4] In the Hebrew, *Shall be guilty*—that, is punished on account of their ill desert. "The Lord redeemeth

[1] Gen. xlii. 21.
[2] Gen. xxvi. 10.
[3] Psalm v. 10.
[4] Psalm xxxiv. 21, 22.

the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate." Again, in the Hebrew, it is, *Shall be guilty*—that is, exposed to punishment as ill-deserving. "Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate."[1] In the Hebrew, *Are reckoned guilty*—that is, as justly exposed to punishment. "*Asham* is taken by some of the earlier writers in the sense of being desolate. Its true sense is that of being recognized as guilty and treated accordingly; it, therefore, suggests the ideas of both guilt and punishment." "For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of Hosts, though their land was filled with sin [in Hebrew, *with guilt*] against the holy One of Israel."[2] That is, though they have richly deserved punishment, they have not been dealt with according to their deserts. In these citations from the Old Testament I have purposely avoided all the passages in which the term is used in relation to the guilt-offering. The distinction of these offerings from the sin-offering is so obscure that I have not felt at liberty to present any theory, or to deduce any inference from the use of the word. The cases quoted are sufficient to elucidate the general usage.

In the authorized version of the New Testament the term *guilty* occurs about six times, and its meaning in each case is clear and definite, though it is conveyed in the original by different words. "Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty."[3] The original is *ὀφείλει, he is a debtor*, and the word is so translated in the preceding verse. It is only in reference to their guilt that sins can be represented as debts, and sinners as debtors. The notion which underlies this mode of representation is, that the obligation to render satisfaction to the law is as truly grounded in justice as the obligation to discharge a pecuniary claim, and that God is no less defrauded of His rights when a sinner escapes with impunity than a creditor is robbed of his dues when left in the lurch by a dishonest

[1] Isaiah xxiv. 6. [2] Jer. li. 5. [3] Matt. xxiii. 18.

debtor. "What think ye? They answered and said he is guilty of death,"[1] ἔνοχος θανάτου ἐστὶ—that is, *he is worthy of death*, or he *deserves to die*. The term ἔνοχος expresses the general notion of being under the arrest of the law, and is construed with the dative or genitive of the punishment, or the dative of the tribunal to which the culprit is responsible; ἔνοχος θανάτου accordingly means, *held by the law to death*, or *liable to death under the law*. It unites the notions of guilt and punishment. This is remarkably the case in Mark xiv. 64: "And they all condemned him to be guilty of death," κατέκριναν αὐτὸν εἶναι ἔνοχον θανάτου. He was not only considered as worthy of death, but actually sentenced to death. He was dealt with according to his alleged demerit. In Rom. iii. 19 we have still a different mode of indicating guilt: "That every mouth may be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God," ὑπόδικος γένηται πᾶς ὁ κόσμος τῷ θεῷ. Here the notion of condemnation is evidently the prominent one. The consciousness of ill desert is signalized in the speechlessness which seizes the criminals at the bar, and the consequence of their crimes is expressed by the sentence which proceeds from the omniscient Judge.

From these passages it is clear that the theological determinations of guilt are strictly scriptural; it expresses the relation of sin to the penalty of the law, the state of one who is justly exposed to condemnation or who has already received the sentence. It is the link which connects the sinner with his doom, the bond which unites transgression with death. Its primary and radical notion, as Owen remarks, is desert of punishment, and all other applications are grounded in that.

Without this distinction of the stain and guilt of sin, imputation cannot be understood;

It is extremely important to have clear views of the distinction betwixt the stain and the guilt of sin. Without them it is impossible to understand the imputation of one man's sin to another. If it be meant that the personal character of one is transfused into another, that the habits

[1] Matt. xxvi. 66.

which belong to one are made the subjective property of another, and that the acts performed by one are really made to be the acts of another, the doctrine would be simply contradictory and absurd. It would amount to saying that two beings are different and yet the same; that their personalities are distinct, but their personal identity is one. To impute sin involves no such confusion of the subjective states of different agents; it means merely that one is held responsible for the acts of another. Whether this can be done justly is one question—whether it involves a contradiction in terms is quite another. If reference be had to the stain of sin, such an imputation is a sheer impossibility, but if to the guilt of sin, it is plain and obvious to the feeblest intelligence. Most of the objections to the imputation of sin are founded upon a gross inattention to this distinction. They deal with it as if it involved a transfer of subjective states or acts, the transfusion of the stain, and not the imputation of guilt. In the *next* place, the distinction betwixt the doctrines of justification and sanctification turns upon the distinction betwixt pollution and guilt. Sanctification is an inward subjective change, removing the stain or filth of sin, and restoring the image of God in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Justification is an external change, touching our relations to the law, and removes the guilt and condemnation under which we lie. Sanctification infuses habits of grace—justification cancels the necessity of punishment. Sanctification conforms us with the precept—justification delivers us from the penalty of the law. One deals with the stain—the other with the guilt of sin.

nor yet the difference between Justification and Sanctification.

The terminology of the Scripture in relation to sin is such as to keep the distinction between these two properties prominently before the mind. When our sins are described as diseases, as wounds, as ulcers, as filth and impurity, the reference is to the stain—the *macula*. When our sins are described as debts, as crimes, as offences, as trespasses

This distinction pervades Scripture, and lies at the foundation of Redemption.

as injuries or wrongs, the reference is to the guilt of sin. The distinction not only pervades the phraseology of Scripture, but lies at the foundation of the whole scheme of redemption. The Gospel is a riddle without it.

A Popish distinction approved, but

The distinction drawn by the Papists betwixt *reatus culpæ* and *reatus pœnæ* has been denounced by Protestants as self-contradictory and absurd, but I think without reason. It is really their own distinction between *potential* and *actual* guilt, or guilt in the first and second acts. The *reatus culpæ* is the essential ill desert of sin—that property by virtue of which it renders the transgressor a just subject of punishment; *quo, peccator ex se indignus statuitur Dei gratia, dignus vero ipsius ira et damnatione.* This is surely nothing but the familiar *dignitas pœnæ. Reatus pœnæ,* on the other hand, is actual condemnation, or the positive ordination of the offender to merited punishment; *quo, obnoxius est damnationi et ad eam obligatur.* The thing to be blamed is not the distinction itself, but the use which is made of it. The

the use made of it condemned.

Papists wish to lay a foundation for their doctrine of purgatory and of penitential satisfactions, and have, consequently, invented a distinction of pardons, by virtue of which a man may be received into favour, and yet held partially responsible for his sins. The *culpa* may be remitted, and the *pœna,* to some extent, retained. Though accepted in Christ, the penitent transgressor may yet be required, either in this life or the next, to undergo sufferings which are strictly of the nature of satisfactions to the justice of God. This is the point to be condemned, and it is here in the doctrine of a partial pardon—a remission of guilt without the removal of the whole penalty—that the absurdity lies. This is a contradiction, to say that a man can be pardoned and yet must be punished—that his ill desert is removed, but its judicial consequence remains. The whole sum of their doctrine we may, with Hooker,[1] reduce to these two grounds: "First,

[1] Works, vol. iii., p. 799, Oxford edit., 1836—Serm. iii.

the justice of God requireth that after unto the penitent sin is forgiven, a temporal, satisfactory punishment be, notwithstanding, for sin, inflicted by God on man. Secondly, the same doth also require that such punishment being not inflicted in this world, it be in the world to come endured; that so, to the justice of God, full and perfect satisfaction be made." The language of the Council of Trent[1] is: *Si quis post acceptam justificationis gratiam, cuilibet peccatori pœnitenti, culpam ita remitti et reatum æternæ pœnæ deleri dixerit, ut nullus remaneat reatus pœnæ temporalis exsolvendæ, vel in hoc seculo vel in futuro purgatorio, antequam ad regna cœlorum aditus patere possit, anathema sit.* I need add nothing to the able and conclusive refutation of the doctrine contained in the third book of Calvin's Institutes, chap. iv., § 25, to the end. The whole plausibility which even Thomas Aquinas has been able to impart to it arises from a singular confusion of chastisement with punishments—a topic which has already been discussed.

[1] Sess. vi., De Just. Can. xxx.

LECTURE XVI.

DEGREES OF GUILT.

THAT all sins are not equal, but that there is a difference in degrees of guilt, is, at once, the doctrine of common sense and of the Word of God. The Stoical paradox, ingeniously defended by Cicero, carries no more conviction with it than similar sophisms against the possibility of motion or the reality of the infinite. To say that there is as much malignity in a foolish jest as in a deliberate slander, in an angry word as in a premeditated murder, is to contradict—nay more, to outrage and shock—the moral sentiments of mankind. It is one thing to say that offences are equally sins; it is quite another to say that they are equal sins. One simply predicates reality—the other, degree. All poisons are equally poisons—that is, all are really and truly poisons; but all poisons are not equal as poisons—that is, are not possessed of the same degree of virulence.

Stoical paradox.

That sins admit of a greater and a less is not only distinctly stated in the Scriptures, but implied in manifold forms of argument. The cities in which our Saviour performed his mighty works are represented as accumulating by their impenitence a degree of guilt transcending that of the cities of the Plain. It shall be more tolerable, is the oft-repeated declaration of the Son of man, for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such cities. So in Luke xii. 47, 48: "And that servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according

Testimony of Scripture.

to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." The sin of those who delivered the Saviour to Pilate is expressly said to be aggravated by the superhuman dignity of his character. "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."[1] The Apostle John makes a distinction of sins, which, however the language in which it is expressed may have been perverted and abused in the notorious distinction of venial and mortal sins, is wholly unintelligible except upon the supposition that there are degrees of malignity in sin. The same truth stands prominently out in what our Saviour teaches concerning the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and what Paul teaches concerning a final and irretrievable apostasy. So, too, the arguments of the Scriptures are often from a less to a greater: "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"[2] "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace!"[3] The same doctrine pervades the ritual of the Old Testament, in which different offerings were prescribed according to the different degrees of guilt.

Jovinian.

Jovinian, a monk in the age of Augustin, is said to have been the first who attempted to graft the Stoic paradox of the equality of sins upon the Christian faith; but his efforts were wholly unsuccessful. Indeed, it is not certain that his opinions have been candidly

[1] John xix. 11. [2] Heb. ii. 2, 3. [3] Heb. x. 28, 29.

and impartially represented. It has been surmised that the doctrine was attributed to him not in consequence of any articulate statement of it, but as an inference from other doctrines which he taught, and which it was attempted to cover with odium by charging them with this absurdity. He expressly maintained that widows and virgins acquired no more merit by celibacy than marriage, and from this it was inferred that he asserted the absolute equality of merits, and, by consequence, the absolute equality of sins.[1] The doctrine has also been attributed to Pelagius, but I suspect upon no better grounds than those on which it was ascribed by some of the Papists to the Reformers. It was merely an exaggerated form to which his real opinions were reduced.

Pelagius.

In their controversy with Rome the Reformers had equally to guard against the extreme of a minimum of guilt in which the essential character of sin was lost and the obligation to punishment reduced to zero, and the extreme of making all crimes equally culpable. With one voice they protested that all sin, in its own nature and apart from the provisions of grace, was deadly, and yet that all sins were not equally heinous. Death was due to the least, but death had its degrees, and in the adjustment of these to the degrees of guilt the justice of God was realized. Baier, who was extremely happy in reducing truth to formulas, has expressed precisely the universal sentiment of the Reformation: *Peccata alia graviora, alia leviora esse recte affirmantur; neque tamen propterea existimari debet, aliqua peccata ex se et sua natura ita levia esse, ut damnationem æternam non mereantur.* It is easy to see how the misrepresentation could arise if the Protestants held that all sin was worthy of eternal death; *that* seemed to be equivalent to saying that they amounted to the same thing in the end, and as eternal death stood to the mind as the maximum of all evil, each sin, as containing it potentially, admitted of nothing greater. The distinction of *majus* and

The Reformers.

[1] Baieri Comp. Theol. Hist., Loc. viii., § 2.

minus vanished before this greatest. Still, candid Papists cheerfully acquitted them of maintaining the Stoical paradox.

Westminster doctrine.

The Protestant doctrine as to the degrees of sin is expressed with some fullness in the Westminster Standards: "All transgressions of the law of God are not equally heinous, but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others. Sins receive their aggravations—1. From the persons offending; if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others. 2. From the parties offended; if immediately against God, his attributes and worship, against Christ and his grace, the Holy Spirit, His witness and workings, against superiors, men of eminency, and such we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them, or any other, and the common good of all or of many. 3. From the nature and quality of the offence; if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins; if not only conceived in the heart, but break forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation; if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the Church, civil punishments, and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants and engagements to God or men; if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance or relapsing after repentance. 4. From circumstances of time and place; if on the Lord's day, or other time of Divine worship, or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages; if in public or in the presence of others who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled."[1]

These determinations are not only fortified by Scripture,

[1] Larg. Cat., Ques. 150, 151.

but they commend themselves to every unsophisticated conscience. They are founded in truth and reason. The principle, however, upon which they rest is not evolved, and therefore as a scientific reduction they cannot be accepted as complete. We want a law by virtue of which we can explain the circumstance that transgressions vary in malignity. That law must be sought in the nature of sin as involving a subjective condition and an objective matter. There is the thing commanded or forbidden; there is the attitude of the mind in relation to it. Now, among the things commanded or forbidden—that is, in the object-matter of the law—there is an obvious difference in magnitude and importance. Some precepts respect rights which are inherently of greater moment than others, and in this aspect some of the commandments may be regarded as greater than others. There is one which our Saviour tells us deserves to be called The first and the great commandment. The arrangement of the Decalogue turns upon the intrinsic importance of the various spheres to which the precept or prohibition pertains. First come God and the whole department of Divine worship; then comes the family, the very keystone of the arch which sustains society; then come the interests of man in the order of their magnitude—first, the protection of life, next the purity of families, then the rights of property, and finally the security of character. Here, therefore, is an obvious ground of distinction in the object-matter of the law. It is intrinsically a greater evil to insult God than to reproach our neighbours, because God is greater than our neighbours. It is a greater sin to be contemptuous to a parent than wanting in respect to others, because the parental is the most solemn and sacred of all social ties. It is a greater crime to rob a fellow-man of his life than to defraud him of his property, because life is more than meat or raiment. It is a greater crime to defile a man's wife than to circulate a lie to his injury, because the purity of families can never be

One ground of the distinction.

restored when once lost, but an idle lie may be refuted or lived down.

The other ground of distinction is in the subjective condition of the agent. The degrees of guilt, in this aspect, will depend upon the degree of intensity in the sinful principle of action—that is, the degree of opposition to the authority of conscience and the law. The more a sin indicates the power and presence of evil in the soul, the more flagrant it becomes. The more it asserts the principle of self-seeking and self-sufficiency,—the more it reveals of the spirit of apostasy from God,—the more aggravated it is. Now, as a general rule, the potency of the inward principle of sin is measured by the light which is resisted. If a man is conscious of his duty, or, in the language of the Saviour, "That servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." Or, to state this aspect of the case in another form: The degree of guilt depends upon the degree of completeness with which the sinful act has been produced by the will of the agent,[1] or the degree of fullness with which the will has entered into it; and this again will be measured by the degree of consciousness that it is sin. The highest form of evil is reached when a man deliberately perpetrates what he knows to be wrong upon the ground that it is wrong; when, like Milton's Satan, he deliberately makes evil his good; and every approximation to this condition is an increase of guilt.

The other ground of distinction.

Still, it is not to be denied that there are sins of ignorance which reveal a deeper malignity of the power of evil than even sins against knowledge when they have not reached the height of presumptuous malice. There are cases in which the ignorance itself is a confession of desperate depravity—in which it could not be conceived as possible without a monstrous perversion and degradation of the moral nature. Wherever

Yet ignorance, sometimes from desperate depravity.

[1] Müller, vol. i., p. 218.

ignorance pertains to the essential principles of rectitude—those eternal rules of right which have been written on the heart of man and which constitute the indispensable condition of his moral agency; there, ignorance itself is a sin, and a sin in the moral sphere analogous to suicide in the sphere of life. Such ignorance is always the result of sin, as well as the cause—the child as well as the parent. It is condemned by casuists as voluntary in its origin, and as imparting a voluntary character to all its products. The crimes to which it leads are extenuated in guilt only in the sense that they are less heinous in those who are thus degraded than they would be in those who committed them with the full consciousness of their malignity. The heathen are guilty for their idolatries, superstitions and profane worship—their guilt is of frightful magnitude; and the only sense in which their blindness extenuates it is that these same abominations are not so odious in them as they would be in those who enjoy the light of the Christian revelation. The only cases in which ignorance absorbs the sin are those in which the ignorance has no connection with the proper exercise of the moral understanding. Whenever the application of an habitual rule is conditioned by outward circumstances, contingent and mutable, then a mistake in the application, through an error in the facts, is not formally sin. If, for example, the sister of a young man had been separated from him in early life, and he had satisfactory reasons for believing that she was dead—if, under these circumstances, he should subsequently meet with her as a stranger and contract an intimacy ending in marriage—no sin could be imputed to him. He would be unfortunate, but not criminal. The ignorance was not of that kind which implies a perversion of the moral nature. The distinction has been clearly pointed out by Müller:[1] "And assuredly there is a so-called sin of ignorance, in which the ignorance entirely removes the guilt, and therewith altogether the character of real sin. One distinguishes in the ignorance which is here under consideration, as is well known, ignorance of the obligatory law and unac-

[1] Vol. i., pp. 219, 220.

quaintance with its own action according to its *full determinateness*. Now the knowledge of one's own conduct refers, according to one of its sides, to the sphere of the external, to the infinite manifoldly conditioned relations in which every action takes place. But in this sphere confusion and ignorance may very well take place, and therefrom an error in conduct arise, without the smallest degree of guilt in the individual acting, through any deficiency of attention or the like. If any one, for example, disposes of another's property in the opinion fully warranted from the circumstances that it is his own, there exists, it is true, *a violation of right*, although there is only a civil but *no moral guilt*. . . . . Therefore this kind of error has no place here; but that which arises from the inordinate selfish endeavour, and thus contradicts the moral law, is guilt, whether the faulty individual be conscious or not conscious of this contradiction. Certainly, if it were altogether impossible for any one to become acquainted with the contents of the moral law, and in consequence he could not at all become conscious of that inordinate striving as of that which ought not to be, the imputation to such an one of that which may appear in his life as sin would certainly be made void, but equally therewith the completeness of human nature. The distinction too between the *insurmountable* and the *surmountable* ignorance in the moment of decision may indeed condition the degree of guilt, but cannot decide concerning the presence or non-presence of guilt. To be in ignorance or error in the sphere of the outward, the accidental, the mutable, does not bring reproach to man; but not to know the essential truth which announces itself in the conscience, and its relation to the individual act, is, itself, just the consequence of a sinfully disordered condition of his inward life."

Infelicity of the erring conscience.

The subject of an erring conscience is treated by Taylor with considerable minuteness in the first book of the Ductor Dubitantium; and he shows by many apt and painful illustrations that such "is its infelicity that if it goes forward, it enters into a folly; if it resists, it enters into madness; if it flies, it

dashes its head against a wall, or falls from a rock; if it flies not, it is torn in pieces by a bear." The victim of moral ignorance is under the fatal necessity of sin, whether he resists or obeys his conscience. If he resists conscience, he acts under the formal notion that he is doing wrong, and thereby reveals the principle of evil; if he obeys, he rejects the materially good, and thereby evinces the moral disorder of his soul. He can turn neither to the right nor to the left without sin—it is the curse which cleaves to his condition; and the only remedy is in the removal of the evil by the communication of spiritual light.

While the general doctrine is maintained that there are degrees of guilt, and that these are conditioned by the objective nature of the crime and the subjective condition of the agent, it is preposterous to suppose that a scale of iniquity can be framed by which the precise malignity of every offence shall be determined. The whole system of the Romish Confessional is founded in delusion. The same act, materially considered, varies in culpability in every instance in which it is performed by the same person or by others. The subjective state of the agent is not a fixed but a fluctuating quantity; and even things materially insignificant may be rendered aggravated crimes by the state of the heart which produces them. The disposition, too, to measure in scales the amount of our misdeeds is a bad symptom. The heart that is truly penitent feels that all guilt is enormous—that even its lightest offences are intolerable burdens; and is so thoroughly impressed with the magnitude of its wickedness that instead of attempting to extenuate its fault in comparison with others, it is ready, with the apostle, to confess that it is the very chief of sinners.

Scale of the Romish Confessional preposterous.

Sins, classified according to their guilt, may be obviously reduced to sins of presumption, sins of ignorance and sins of weakness. Sins of presumption vary according to the degree of deliberation and malice which they respectively involve,

Three classes of sins, according to their guilt.

until they culminate in that highest and most appalling of all offences, the sin against the Holy Ghost. Sins of ignorance vary according to the extent to which the ignorance is voluntary—that is, more precisely stated, according to the degree in which the ignorance implies a perverted development of the moral nature. Sins of infirmity, which consist in the power of temptation to prevail over the authority of conscience where the duty is known, or in the force of sudden impulses and passions in preventing reflection, vary according to the strength of the temptation and the depth and earnestness of the struggle. They are all malignant; the least is poison; the touch of any is death. But what a picture does even this graduated scale of guilt present of poor human nature! From weakness up to deliberate malice—a weakness which is itself a sin and a sign of general ruin and decay, up to a presumption which reveals a kindred between man and devils; this is the line which the human heart is always tracing and human life ceaselessly exemplifying. If, by comparison among themselves, some offences are smaller than others, by comparison with God, with the holy law, and the perfect ideal of human nature, the least is enough to fill us with horror and dismay; and not the least evidence of the fearful wreck of our nature is the tendency which unspiritual men cherish to look upon some as absolutely small. Well may we say with Cicero: *Parva res est, at magna culpa.*

yet all malignant and deadly.

Hence, Protestants, with one voice, with the exception of the Socinians—and they are no more entitled to be considered as Christians than Mohammedans—have rejected with abhorrence the Papal distinction between venial and mortal sins. They have unanimously asserted from the very dawn of the Reformation—Lutherans as well as Calvinists, in harmony with apostles and the earliest and soundest confessors of the truth—that "every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness and holiness of God, and against His

Papal distinction of venial and mortal sins.

righteous law, deserveth His wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come, and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ."[1] By venial sins the Papists understand those which are not inconsistent with spiritual life, and which are not subversive of a supreme and steady regard to the great end of our being. Thomas Aquinas says that they are not against the law, but beside the law—not *contra legem*, but *præter legem*. The meaning is, that they are not so against the law as to be destructive of the end of the commandment, which is charity, but beside the law, as they imply something of disorder and inconsistency with the perfect harmony of the soul. They are slight irregularities, but not real disturbances of the spiritual life. They are said to be of three kinds, according as they are determined by the nature of their object-matter, the imperfect causation by the agent, or the insignificance of the act. The first are venial *ex genere;* the second, *ex imperfectione operis;* the third, *ex parvitate materiæ*. When the object-matter of an act, though implying some irregularity, does not turn one aside from the supreme end of his being, nor contradict the principle of charity, the offence is denominated venial from its own nature—it does not deserve death. To this class belong such irregularities and indecencies as idle words, frivolous jests and excessive laughter.[2] To the second class belong those irregularities which, though pertaining to an object-matter in itself deadly, have not a full and complete causation by the agent—his will does not thoroughly enter into them. Such are the sudden emotions of luxury, pride, resentment. Here, as the deliberation is imperfect, the act is not complete, and consequently does not amount to a consent of the will in the deadly object. In this way any mortal sin can be rendered venial. To the third class belong those offences in which, although the object-matter is deadly, yet the act is so insignificant as to make it incongruous to punish it with death. To this head are reduced petty thefts, in which the amount stolen is too small to be called a real injury; delicate scandal;

[1] Larg. Cat., Qu. 152. [2] Aqui., Sum. Pars Prim. Sec., Qu. 88.

a little too much drink; and a voluntary distraction for a short time in Divine worship. Mortal sin, on the other hand, is that which is destructive of spiritual health and life—it is, in its own nature, deadly and deserves the punishment of eternal death.

Now the point which Protestants maintain is that there are no irregularities, however slight, in the moral sphere which it would be unjust in God to punish with death—no irregularities, that can be properly called sins, which in their own nature are such that temporal inconvenience is the only mark of disapprobation which it becomes the holiness of God to impress upon them. There are no sins inherently and essentially venial. It is cheerfully conceded that all sins, save one, are rendered venial through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That cleanseth from all sin, but the question is not concerning the efficacy of the atonement to cancel guilt, but the nature of the guilt itself. Is there a guilt which does not need the blood of the Redeemer—a guilt which of its own nature and from the sentence of the law does not exclude from the Divine favour? It would seem that the simple statement of the question would suggest the answer. The notion of a sin which is not in itself contradictory to spiritual health and life, which does not leave a stain that mars the beauty and harmony of the soul, is a contradiction in terms. To prove that an act does not involve any turning away from God, does not disturb the supreme and steady prosecution of our highest end, is to prove not that it is venial, but that it is no sin. What is not inconsistent with that love which is the fulfilling of the law, it would be wise above what is written to pronounce a transgression of the law. Those irregularities which seem to us so slight are slight only by comparison. They are mingled with such deep and fearful disorder that their intrinsic nature is hid in the profound darkness which surrounds them. But figure to yourselves an angel or a glorified saint indulging in these peccadilloes in heaven! The supposition is so

With Protestants, no sins venial in their own nature.

monstrous and revolting that Aquinas has admitted, and not only admitted but proved, that a perfectly holy being is incapable of a venial sin, and that it is not until he has lost his integrity by mortal sin he can be betrayed into these weaknesses.[1] But if they are obliged to be the result of deadly sin—that is, if they can only be conceived as springing from a condition of moral apostasy—they must partake of the nature of their cause. It is impossible in estimating their guilt to detach them from the collective moral state of the agents. That creates them, and therefore that must determine their significancy. Hence, I cannot but think that Müller has fallen into error in the countenance which he has given to the distinction of the Papists. He seems to think it possible to isolate the individual act from the generic condition which originates it, and he overlooks the disturbing influence which "the smallest precipitation or inattentiveness" would necessarily exert upon the character of a sinless creature. But whatever may be our speculations, the authority of Scripture is decisive. "The wages of sin is death."[2] The alternative is inevitable—either venial sin is not sin at all, or it deserves to be visited with death. "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."[3] Here again the alternative is inevitable—either venial sin is not prohibited by the law, or it brings the transgressor under the curse. If it is prohibited by the law, there is as really a contempt of the Divine authority (which is the formal ground of the obligation of the law) in these small irregularities as in the weightier matters which pertain to the rights of God and our neighbours. To every unsophisticated conscience the venial offences which spring from the imperfection of the act or the insignificance of the matter are as really sins as the finished transgressions or the more important matters of the same class. The sudden invasions of passion, of anger, malice and revenge show an unsound state of the heart,

[1] Sum. Prim. Sec., Ques. 89, 3.
[2] Rom. vi. 23.
[3] Gal. iii. 10.

reveal a disease which is essentially fatal; and the man who can see any difference, except in degree, between the stealing of a shilling and the stealing of a thousand pounds, who can see any difference which removes one and leaves the other under the category of knavery, possesses either extraordinary acuteness or extraordinary dullness of spiritual perception. Surely we should suppose that he who apologized for his dishonesty by pleading the smallness of his thefts was not grounded in the nature and root of moral distinctions.

Very partial adoption of a modified sense of this distinction.

There is a modified sense in which the distinction betwixt venial and mortal sins has been tolerated in the Protestant Church. It is not that some are while others are not deserving of eternal death, but some are more violently contradictory to a state of grace than others. Some are totally incompatible with the health and comfort of the Divine life; they destroy all peace of conscience, all sensible communion with God, and provoke his severe and grievous chastisements. They bring about a spiritual declension, which without the provisions of grace would terminate in the total extinction of the Divine life. They cancel the consciousness of a state of grace. These sins are *par eminence* mortal. There are others which do not disturb our spiritual peace—which, though the occasions of a constant conflict, are yet the means of a more vigorous and watchful exercise of prayer and faith.[1] But it is certainly illogical to treat as contraries what differ only by accidental circumstances. All these sins are in their own nature mortal—that is, deserving of eternal death—all are pardonable and are actually pardoned through the blood of Christ. It would be much better to signalize them by terms expressive of that

[1] In other words, mortal sins are those which separate from the kingdom of God, and which therefore must be totally abandoned if we hope to be saved. Venial sins are those which cleave to us as remnants of inbred corruption until the period of our complete sanctification; they are the lustings of the flesh which shall never cease until the flesh is laid aside in the grave. See De Moor, cap. xv., § 38.

which really distinguishes them—different degrees of the same kind of guilt. Indeed, the terms *venial* and *mortal* have been very partially adopted; they never harmonized with the conscience of the Protestant Church.

One sin which cannot be forgiven.

There is one sin, however, about which there can be no mistake. It is marked by a bold pre-eminence of guilt which distinguishes it from every form of iniquity in which man can be involved. It precludes the possibility of pardon by putting beyond the pale of redeeming blood. Our Saviour twice signalized it in his own earthly teachings, and branded it as blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.[1] John alludes to it without specifically describing it, and calls it a sin unto death, which we are not at liberty to pray for when we know that it has been committed. Paul, twice in the course of the Epistle to the Hebrews, makes mention of its hopeless character, and in one passage enters into a somewhat detailed description of the offence itself. That John and Paul have their eye upon the same sin which our Saviour had so awfully reprobated is to be gathered from the fact that the sin unto death and the irrevocable apostasy agree in their distinguishing property with the sin against the Holy Ghost, and the still further fact that the language of our Saviour evidently implies that there is but one sin possessed of this fearful malignity. It is, therefore, by a comparison of all these passages that we must settle the nature of the sin.

Not final impenitency.

It is clear, in the first place, that it cannot be, as Augustin and others have imagined, the sin of final impenitency. Final impenitency differs only in the accident of time from any other impenitency, and therefore is not unpardonable from its own nature, but from the relation in which it happens to stand to the remedy. Impenitence itself, divested of the relation of time, is constantly pardoned, and it is the very thing which the invitations, promises and motives of the Gospel are designed to induce men to lay aside.

[1] Matt. xii. 31; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10.

Not insult to the Person of the Spirit.

Neither can this sin be regarded as any peculiar insult to the Person of the Holy Ghost. Those thoughts of blasphemy against Him—those horrible and revolting expressions of wickedness and reproach which Satan often injects into the minds of the saints, in order to torture them with the fear that they have fallen into irrevocable guilt, have no more malignity in them than similar offences against the first or second Persons of the Trinity. If it were the personal aspect of these sins that imparted to them their malice, it would seem that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost would be less aggravated than that against the Father and the Son. As God, they are all one, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; as Persons, the Father is the first, the Son is the second, and the Holy Spirit the third. There is an order according to which the last place belongs to the Holy Ghost. Hence, no form of mere personal reproach can be meant.

Not peculiar to the time of the miraculous gifts.

Neither, again, was it an offence so connected with the miraculous period of the dispensation of the Gospel as to be no longer possible when signs and wonders ceased to attest the Divine origin of Christianity. To attribute the miracles of Christ to the agency of Beelzebub was no more to blaspheme the Holy Ghost than to blaspheme the Father or the Son. Jesus ascribes these miracles more frequently to the Father than to the Spirit, and not unfrequently finds in Himself as His own personal property the power by which He performed them. No traduction, therefore, of His supernatural agency in the sphere of the outward world can be construed into this sin, and we are not authorized from anything recorded in relation to it to limit its possibility to the comparatively short period of miraculous gifts.

It is sin against the Spirit in His official character.

The Holy Ghost as the object of this sin is to be regarded in His official character—the agent who reveals Christ to the hearts and consciences of men as an adequate and complete Saviour. His work is to take of the things of Christ and

make them known to the darkened understanding of the sinner. The sin, therefore, must be a sin which pertains directly to Christ as He is manifested in the Gospel, and manifested by the Spirit to the minds of men. With this key the celebrated passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews unlocks the mystery as far forth as we can ever expect to have it unlocked in the present life. It is there described, and in this exposition I but repeat the sentiments of Calvin, Turrettin, Maresius, Marck and the great body of Reformed theologians, that it is a total apostasy from the true religion (with a full conviction supernaturally produced that it is the truth of God), arising from intense and malignant opposition to the truth itself—an opposition so intense and malignant that it would delight to repeat the tragedy of Calvary out of mere hatred to Christ, and actually vents itself in bitter reproaches, and, as it has opportunity, bitter persecution of all true believers. It is just the spirit of the Devil incarnate. It is mad and furious hate, the very exuberance of malice, breaking forth in the midst of a light which is as irresistible to the conscience as it is detestable to the heart. It is distinguished by this light from every sin of ignorance, by the nature of the light from a sin of infirmity, and by the virulence of its hate from every other sin of presumption. It turns man into a fiend. It is a combination of satanic intelligence with satanic hate. Such is its general nature, and the reason why it is unpardonable is perhaps the same as that which has left the devils without redemption.

Sentiments of the Reformers.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following article is inserted here because its contents pertain chiefly to the topics which Dr. Thornwell regarded as belonging to the first two parts of Theology—all which, according to our classification of his writings, will be embraced in this first volume.

It was written about one year after his inauguration as Professor of Theology, for the Southern Presbyterian Review, and appeared in the January No. of that work for 1858.

The propriety of inserting in this volume of Theological dissertations an article containing so much that is *personal*, may be questioned. But it would have been impossible to leave out what was interwoven with the whole texture of the production. Moreover, as affording an exhibition of Dr. Thornwell's heart as well as mind, it was deemed proper to publish it just as it was written. The reader will take pleasure in noting the admiration and love expressed by the author for one who, at the time he wrote, was fighting side by side with him for principles which he held inexpressibly dear.

THEOLOGY, ITS PROPER METHOD

AND

ITS CENTRAL PRINCIPLE.

BEING A REVIEW OF BRECKINRIDGE'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD OBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

IN the general notice which we have already taken of this book[1] we promised, in our present number, to make it the subject of a more distinct consideration. That promise we proceed to redeem.

[1] The notice referred to was as follows:

It is generally regarded as an evil incidental to Theological Seminaries that they withdraw a large amount of talent, piety and learning from the service of the pulpit, and to that extent have a tendency to weaken the energies of the Church. This book is a triumphant refutation of all charges of the sort. Our Theological Professors are Preachers upon a large scale—Preachers not only to preachers, but to all the congregations of the land. In their studies they are putting forth an influence which, like the atmosphere, penetrates to every part of the country. The energies of the Church can only be competently developed when there is a due mixture of action and speculation, of private study and public labour; and although the two things are not in themselves incompatible, and must be found in every minister of the Gospel, yet they are not likely to be wisely blended unless there are men whose business it is to give themselves, some to one, some to the other, predominantly, if not exclusively. We must have representatives of each, and the character formed from their combined agency is the character needed in the service of the pulpit. We congratulate the young Seminary at Danville on the omen which it gives of extensive and profound usefulness. Dr. Breckinridge's book will take its place by the side of the works of the greatest masters, and none will feel that they are dishonoured by the company of the newcomer. It has peculiar merits. It is strictly an original work—the pro-

Dr. Breckinridge has been so eminently a man of action, and the impression so widely prevails that action and speculation demand intellects of different orders, that a very general apprehension was entertained, when this work was announced as in press, that it was destined to be a failure. Few could persuade themselves that the great debater was likely to prove himself a great teacher—that he who had been unrivalled in the halls of ecclesiastical legislation should be equally successful in the halls of theological science. There was no foundation for the fear. Those qualities of mind which enable a man to become a leader in any great department of action are precisely the qualities which ensure success in every department of speculation. Thought and action are neither contradictories nor opposites. On the contrary, thought is the soul of action, the very life of every enterprise which depends on principle and not on policy.[1] It is the scale upon which the thinking is done

duct of the author's own thoughts, the offspring of his own mind. He has studied and digested much from the labours of others, but has borrowed nothing. No matter from what quarter the materials have been gathered, they are worked up by him into the frame and texture of his own soul before they are sent forth; and in this respect he has produced a book widely different from the miserable compilations with which, on almost every subject, the country is flooded. The plan, too, adapts it to general use. The humblest Christian can read it with almost as much profit as the minister. It is pure, unmixed Gospel, presented in a form at once suited to edify and instruct. It is not a dry, didactic treatise—but a warm, living, glowing representation of the truths of religion in their beauty, their power and their glory. The author's soul is always on fire. He knows God only to love him, and he seems to feel that he has taught nothing until he has kindled the same flame in the minds of his pupils.

Thus much, in general, we have thought proper to say in relation to this remarkable work. But we cannot, in justice to our readers nor in justice to one who has been so eminently blessed in his labours for Christ and His Church, pass it over with this vague commendation. We propose in our next number to make it the subject of a full and articulate notice; and in the mean time we trust that all our readers will put themselves in a condition to appreciate our criticisms by studying the work for themselves.

[1] Non viribus aut velocitatibus aut celeritate corporum, res magnæ geruntur, sed consilio, auctoritate, sententia. Cic. de Senect., c. 6.

that determines the scale upon which measures are projected and carried out. Bacon was none the less a philosopher because he was a great statesman, and the highest achievements of Greek genius were among those who were as ready for the tented field as the shades of the Academy. The small politician, the brawling demagogue, the wire-worker in elections, the intriguing schemer and the plausible manager can never succeed in any walk of meditation; not because they are men of action, but because they are incapable of anything that deserves to be called action. Restlessness and action are no more synonymous than friskiness and business; and the interminable piddler, the miserable maggot of society that can never be still for a moment, might just as well be confounded with the industrious citizen as the man of tricks with the man of action. He who is able to embody great thoughts in achievements suitable to their dignity, he who can think illustrious deeds, is precisely the man who will think most forcibly in fitting words. Actions and words are only different expressions of the same energy of mind, and the thought in language has generally preceded the thought in deeds. Convinced that the popular impression in regard to the incompatibility of action and speculation was a vulgar prejudice, we were prepared to anticipate from Dr. Breckinridge in the field of speculative theology as brilliant success as in the field of ecclesiastical counsel. We expected to find the same essential qualities of mind, the same grasp of thought, vigour of conception, power of elucidation and skill in evolution. We dreaded no failure. We should not have been disappointed at marks of haste and carelessness in the composition, or occasional looseness of expression, or such bold metaphors and animated tropes as belong to the speech rather than the essay. We knew that Horace's precept had not been observed as to the time that the work had been kept under the eye. Blemishes attaching to it as a work of art we were not unprepared to meet with, but we were certain that the thoughts would be the thoughts of a man with whom thinking had been some-

thing more than musing—the system, the system of one who had not been accustomed to sport with visions. We expected to see the truth in bold outline and harmonious proportion—the truth as God has revealed and the renewed soul experiences it, clearly, honestly, completely told. That Dr. Breckinridge has realized our expectations seems to be the general verdict of the public. The work has been received with unwonted favour. It has been praised in circles in which we suspect the author's name has been seldom pronounced with approbation. We have seen but a single notice of it in which censure has been even hinted at, and that was in reference to a point in which the work is entitled to commendation. We allude to the place to which it consigns the argument from final causes for the being of a God. That argument, as it is presented in modern systems of Natural Theology, is not only inconclusive, but pernicious. The God that it gives us is not the God that we want. It makes the Deity but a link in the chain of finite causes, and from the great Creator of the universe degrades him to the low and unworthy condition of the huge mechanic of the world. For aught that appears, matter might have been eternal, its properties essential attributes of its nature, and He may have acquired His knowledge of it and them by observation and experience, as we acquire ours. His power may only be obedience to laws which He has inductively collected, as knowledge on our part, according to the philosophy of Bacon, is the measure of our power. The argument turns on the arrangement of things. Its strength lies in the illustrations of general order and special adaptation which the universe supplies. It does not follow that God *made* the things which He has arranged. He who uses this argument either collects in the conclusion more than he had in the premises, or he limits the infinite and conditions the unconditioned. Surely no intelligent advocate of Theism can be content with a result like this. The true place for the consideration of final causes is just where Dr. Breckinridge has put them in forming from the works of God some con-

ception of His nature and perfections. Given a *Creator*, we can then deduce from the indications of design that He is an intelligent and spiritual being, and this is the light in which, until Scotch psychology had almost succeeded in banishing from the halls of philosophy metaphysical speculations, all the great masters had regarded this argument. The Schoolmen use it to illustrate the *intelligence*, not the *being*, of God. That they rested on a very different aspect of the great question of causation. Howe elaborately demonstrates a Creator before he comes to Wisdom or Design. The process is instructive through which this argument has come to be invested with the importance which is now conceded to it; and if it were not that the mind is all along preoccupied with the notion of a Creator, if it received its impressions of God from the study of final causes alone, we should soon see that the God of contrivances is not the God in whom we live and move. Creation, as a mysterious fact, putting the nature and operations of the Supreme Being beyond the category of all finite causes, removing God immeasurably from the sphere of limited and conditioned existence, is indispensable to any just conceptions of His relations and character. Hence, the Scriptures uniformly represent the ever-living Jehovah as distinguished from all false deities by his creation of the heavens and the earth. This is His memorial throughout all generations. He is not an architect of signal skill and gigantic power, who works materials ready to His hand, and the qualities of which He has mastered from long and patient observation; but by a single exercise of will He gives being to all the substances that exist, with all their properties and laws, and arranges them in the order in which they shall best illustrate His knowledge, wisdom and omnipotence. The finite is dependent on Him for its being as well as its adjustment, and providence is a continued exercise of the energies of creative power and love.

But it is time to proceed to the book itself. Dr. Breckinridge treats Theology as the knowledge of God unto sal-

vation, and his aim is "to demonstrate, classify and expound" those manifestations of the Divine Being from which this knowledge is derived. These manifestations are Creation, Providence, the Incarnation, the Work of the Spirit, the Sacred Scriptures, and the Self-conscious Existence of the Human Soul. The grand departments of theology—that is, the great topics of which its treats—are God Himself, the God-man who is the Mediator between God and men, and Man himself in his self-conscious existence as created and re-created by God. The system of truth which Dr. Breckinridge has developed from these sources and digested under these heads is that which in all ages has been the life of the Church—that which constituted the ancient creed, and has been embodied in modern confessions, and particularly in the Standards of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Breckinridge makes no claims to novelty in doctrines. He has trod in the footsteps of the flock. Satisfied with the old, he has sought no new Gospel, and one of his chief merits is that he has presented the ancient truths of salvation with a freshness, an unction and a power which vindicate to them the real character of a Gospel. What he claims as his own, "that which makes the work individual," is "the conception, the method, the digestion, the presentation, the order, the impression of the whole." In these respects he thinks he has rendered some service to the cause of theology, which, in common with Aristotle, he pronounces to be "the noblest of all sciences." As these are the points in reference to which he wishes his success or failure to be estimated, it is but fair to him that his critics should try him on his own chosen ground.

What, then, is "the conception" of the book? Surely not its definition of *theology*, which is neither new nor even logically exact.[1] It is rather the great idea which underlies

[1] What we mean is that it is too narrow. "The knowledge of God unto *salvation*" defines only the religion of a sinner, or what Owen calls *evangelic theology*, and cannot, without an unwarrantable extension of the terms, be made to embrace the religion of the unfallen. Calvin gives *theology* a wider sense, comprehending both the religion of nature and the

the whole plan, and furnishes the model after which the whole work has been fashioned. This is both original and grand. Let us explain ourselves. Theological truth may be contemplated absolutely as it is in itself, relatively as it is in effects, and elenchtically in its contrasts to error. In the first case it is merely a matter of thought; in the second, of experience; and in the third, of strife. The result, in the first case, is a doctrine; in the second, a life; in the third, a victory. In the first case the mind speculates; in the second, it feels; in third, it refutes. The first Dr. Breckinridge calls *objective* theology.[1] We should prefer to style

religion of grace. It is, in his view, that knowledge of God which is productive of piety. Neque enim Deum, proprie loquendo, cognosci dicemus, ubi nulla est religio, nec pietas. Lib. 1, c. 2, § 1. Theology, considered as a body of speculative truth, may very properly be defined as the science of true religion.

[1] We cannot altogether approve of the selection of the terms *objective* and *subjective* to denote different parts of a scientific treatise. Science is subjective only when considered as the actual possession of the mind that knows; it indicates a habit, and a habit under the formal notion of inhering in some subject or person. It is mine or yours, and subjective only as inhering in you or me. The very moment you represent it in thought it becomes to the thinker *objective*, though as existing in the person who has it it is still subjective. If even the possessor should make it a matter of reflection, it becomes to him, in this relation, objective. The thing known or the thing thought, whether it be material or a mode of mind, is always the object; the mind knowing, and under the formal relation of knowing, is always the subject. Hence, theology subjectively considered, or the knowledge of God subjectively considered, can mean nothing, in strict propriety of speech, but the personal piety of each individual believer considered as the property of his own soul. It is subjective only as it exists *in him*. To a third person, who speculates upon it and examines its laws and operations, it is surely objective. Every scientific treatise, therefore, must deal with its topics, even when they are mental states and conditions, *objectively*. There is no way of *considering* the knowledge of God but by objectifying it. And this accords precisely with the usage of the terms among theological writers. By *objective theology* they mean Divine truth systematically exhibited; by *subjective theology*, holy habits and dispositions considered as in the souls of the faithful. The first they also call abstract, and the second concrete—to convey the idea that, in the one case, truth was contemplated apart from its inhesion; in the other, in connection with its inhesion, or under the notion of its in-

it *abstractive* or *absolute*, as indicating more precisely the absence of relations. The second he entitles *subjective*. We should prefer the epithet *concrete*, as definitely expressing the kind of relation meant. The third he denominates *relative*. We prefer the old name, *polemic* or *critical*, as more exactly defining the kind of relation which is contemplated. These three aspects embrace the whole system of theoretical theology, and upon the principle that the science of contraries is one, and that truth is better understood in itself by being understood in its contrasts, controversial and didactic Divinity are in most treatises combined. The peculiarity of Dr. Breckinridge's method is that he has separated them; and not only separated them, but separated the consideration of the truth in itself from the consideration of it in its effects. The "conception" or idea which suggested this departure from the ordinary method was the intense conviction of the grandeur and glory of the Divine system contemplated simply as an object of speculation. The author felt that it ought to be presented in its own majestic proportions—that there should be nothing to withdraw the gaze of the spectator from the splendid temple. There should be no contrast of a rude hut or dingy walls offending the eye—the temple should

hesion in the subject. We give an example from Turrettin and a reference to Owen:

Theologia supernaturalis consideratur, vel *systematice* prout notat compagem doctrinæ salutaris de Deo et rebus divinis ex Scriptura expressæ, per modum disciplinæ alicujus in sua præcepta certa methodo dispositæ, quæ et *abstractiva et objectiva* dicitur; vel *habitualiter*, et per modum habitus in intellectu residentis, et *concretiva et subjectiva* vocatur. Loc. I., Quæst. 2, § 8.

Cf. Owen's Theologoumena, Lib. I., c. iii.

To this may be added the remark of Sir William Hamilton: "An art or science is said to be *objective* when considered simply as a system of speculative truths or practical rules, but without respect of any actual possessor; *subjective*, when considered as a habit of knowledge or a dexterity inherent in the mind, either vaguely of any, or precisely of this or that possessor." (Reid, p. 808, note.) We think the terms *abstract* and *concrete*, though usually employed synonymously with subjective and objective, better for Dr. Breckinridge's purpose, as less liable to be misunderstood.

speak for itself. Contrasts here would diminish instead of increasing the effect; they would distract the attention and dissipate the impression. Dr. Breckinridge has undertaken to rear the temple of Divine truth—to place it, like the splendid edifice of Solomon, upon a lofty eminence, and to leave it alone to proclaim the glory of the mind which conceived it and in which its noble image dwelt from eternity. He would have it stand before us in colossal majesty, and as each pillar, capital, wall and stone was surveyed, and as the overpowering impression of the whole structure was taken in, he would have no other direction given to those who questioned whether this were a building of God, but *Look around!* The thing speaks for itself. It is a monument of an infinite mind which nothing but wilful blindness can fail to read. This is the conception. The Gospel is its own witness. And to present the Gospel so as to make each proposition vindicate itself by its own inherent excellence, and its relative place and importance in the whole system, is the best argument for the Divine origin of Christianity. Each part is a testimony to Divine wisdom, and the united whole a conspicuous illustration of Divine glory. Dr. Breckinridge has accordingly endeavoured to catch the image from the glass of the Divine word, to collect the scattered rays, and to present them in a picture of Divine and ineffable effulgence. He has assumed that truth must justify itself, that it must stand in its own light, and that the best way to be impressed and enamoured with it is to look at it. As the daughter of God, her high and heavenly lineage is traced in her features. Her looks certify her birth. *Vera incessu patuit Dea.* This conception in itself is not new; it is of the very essence of true faith. But to make it the regulative principle of a theological system is peculiar to Dr. Breckinridge. To fashion his whole course of instruction so as to present in simple and just proportions the whole body of Divine truth; to leave that truth to its own inherent power of self-vindication; to make it a spectacle, or rather an image, of transcendent beauty and glory, the very reflection of the

perfections of God, to be gazed at with admiration, devotion and awe; this never entered into the mind of any system-maker before. The conception in this form is, beyond all controversy, original. With others it has entered as an element of devotion or a topic of sermons. It is the life and soul of a scientific method with Dr. Breckinridge—the last man from whom, according to the popular estimate of his character, such a result might have been anticipated. The hero of an hundred fields, with the wounds and bruises and scars of the conflict scattered thick over his person, ever ready, like the war-horse in Job, to snuff the breeze of battle, could hardly have been expected to delight in the calm visions of peaceful contemplation. The thing does him infinite honour. It shows where his heart is; and whatever may have been the surmises of enemies, it puts beyond doubt that his polemics have been the reflection of an earnest faith—that his rest in the truth, his abiding and satisfying sense of its preciousness, have been the secrets of his zeal in its defence. He has not fought for sect or distinction; he has fought for the glory of God. He had a treasure in the house, and therefore defended it with might and main. There is a polemic who fights for glory or for party; such a combatant knows nothing of the spirit of the Gospel. There is another polemic who fights only for the honour of his God and his Saviour; this man only witnesses a good confession, and treads in the footsteps of Jesus and the martyrs. We cannot forbear to add that Dr. Breckinridge's theological method is a proof, in another aspect of the matter, of the singleness, intensity and earnestness of his character. What he does, he does with his might. Where he loves, he loves with his whole soul; when he hates, he hates with equal cordiality; and when he fights, he wants a clear field and nothing to do but fight. He has arranged his system so as to concentrate his energies upon each department—to do but one thing at a time, and to do it heartily and well. In the first part, he gives himself to meditation and contemplates truth with undisturbed and admiring gaze; in the second,

he gives himself to action, and girds up the loins of his mind for the Divine life; in the third, he buckles on his armour and has an ear for nothing but the trump of war. His method is the picture of the man; and his book, in another sense than that of Milton's, is "the precious life-blood of a master spirit," and "preserves, as in a vial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred it." We doubt whether a mind like that of Dr. Breckinridge, so single and intense, could have written successfully on any other plan.

The topics, we have seen, which he considers as making up the science of Theology are God, Man and the Mediator —in this division differing, in form more than in substance, from those who, like Calvin, refer every thing to only two heads, God and Man. The order in which he has arranged his topics is, so far as we know, wholly original. If it did not bear such evident traces of having sprung from the author's own cogitations, we might be tempted to suspect that he had borrowed the hint from one or two passages in Calvin's Institutes. The clue to his plan is the method of the Spirit in the production of faith. He has copied, in his systematic exposition of Divine knowledge, the Divine procedure in imparting it. As the Spirit first convinces us of our sin and misery, and shuts us up to despair as to any human grounds for relief, so Dr. Breckinridge begins with a survey of man in his individual and social relations, and demonstrates that his ruin is universal and irremediable. As the Spirit revives us by enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and inspires us with hope from the revelation of the Cross, so Dr. Breckinridge next proceeds to consider the Mediator in His Person, States, Offices and wonderful Work; and shows that the provisions of grace are amply adequate, and more than adequate, to repair the ruins of the fall. And as in Christ we know God in the only sense in which He can be a God to us or the soul can rest in the contemplation of His excellencies, so Dr. Breckinridge makes the Divine character, perfections and glory the culminating

point of his scheme. He begins with Man and ends with God, to whom he is conducted through the Mediator. To each of these subjects a book is devoted. Then in another book all the sources of our knowledge of God are consecutively considered, and the treatise closes with a fifth book, which brings us back to the point from which we started, and encounters, in the light of the whole preceding discussion, those great problems of religion which grow out of the relations of the finite and infinite, and which have ever baffled and must continue to baffle the capacities of a creature to comprehend. The order being that of experimental religion, and the design to present truth in its integrity and in its own self-evidencing light, all that constitutes the *precognita* of theology in other systems is here omitted, with the exception of two short digressions at the close of the first book on the Being of God and the Immortality of Man. It may appear a little singular, at first sight, that in a work professedly unfolding the knowledge of God, His very Existence should be treated as a collateral and incidental point —that the fundamental topic upon which most theologians lay out their strength should enter at all only as an *obiter dictum*. This apparently anomalous procedure may be explained in two ways: First, the method of the book requires that all controversies should be remitted to the third part, the Atheistic among the rest. What the child of God believes and knows, and as he believes and knows it in its symmetry and dependence, is the exclusive subject of the first part. In the next place, no science is required to prove —it accepts its principles. God's existence is as much an intuition to the spiritual man as the existence of matter to the natural philosopher. The physical inquirer begins with the assumption that matter is. The theologian, in the same way, is at liberty to begin with the doctrine that God is. The question of His existence belongs to Ontology or to Metaphysics, and not to Theology. It is a question which can only be asked by those who are strangers to spiritual perception, and who recognize no other cognition of God but

that which is analogous to our cognition of other substances and their properties. There are no doubt satisfactory proofs of the being and perfections of God upon ontological grounds, but these proofs give rise to philosophical opinion, not to Divine knowledge. The only knowledge, however, which enters into theology is that which is produced by the illumination of the Spirit, and has all the certainty and force of sense. "The understanding here is something else besides the intellectual powers of the soul, it is the Spirit." Religion has, as Owen observes,[1] its demonstrations as the Mathematics and Dialectics have theirs, but the demonstrations of religion are spiritual and mighty, and as far removed from those of human wisdom as the heavens are from the earth. It should never be forgotten that theology is not a science of the natural, nor even of the moral, knowledge of God. It is not a science of speculative cognition at all. It is the science of a true and loving faith. It is the science of that form of knowledge which produces love, reverence, trust, hope and fear; which contains the seeds of every holy exercise and habit; which understands what is meant by the glory of God, and rejoices in Him as the full, satisfying, everlasting portion of the soul. It is the science of the Divine life in the soul of man. Undertaking to exhibit the data of such a science, which is virtually denied the very moment its principles are not assumed as authenticating themselves, Dr. Breckinridge would have contradicted the whole purpose of his book had he turned the questions of a Divine theology into the forms of a human philosophy. Still, as grace presupposes nature, and spiritual perception, natural apprehension, the great questions of ontology, as far as they relate to the existence of God, should find a place in the polemical department, so that the unbeliever may be left without excuse.

Our readers are, perhaps, all familiar with the splendid passage in Foster's essays in which he attempts to show that, without being possessed of omniscience and omnipresence

[1] Theologoumena, Lib. I., c. ii. Cf. Lib. VI., c. iii.

himself, it is impossible for the Atheist to reach the height of knowing that there is no God. The rhetoric of the passage we have always admired, but the logic appears to us so transparently fallacious that we confess that we have been not a little surprised at Dr. Breckinridge's partial adoption of the argument. The simple truth that there are other existences beside ourselves "draws immediately after it," Dr. Breckinridge maintains, "the utter impossibility of establishing the truth of atheism. Because as there are existences besides myself, and exterior to myself, I must explore the whole universe, and I must be sure that I have explored it all, before it is possible for me to know that one of the existences exterior to myself, some of which have been proved to be eternal, may not be God."—[p. 48.] Surely, from the terms of the definition, if God is not everywhere, He is nowhere; and if I have fully explored any part of the universe and find that he is not there, I may have the absolute certainty that, whoever or whatever may exist in other portions of it, an omnipresent Being does not. Again, we are unable to perceive why, if it were true that there is no God, it would be a truth which a man could not know, as Foster maintains, without knowing all things. Dr. Breckinridge simply affirms that in its own nature this does "not admit of being established or even ascertained by such creatures as we are." If an absolute commencement of existence and the independence of the finite were in themselves true (which is the same as saying that there is no God), and could be apprehended as realized in any object whatever—if anything could be known to begin without being created—this would be a complete demonstration that God, in the sense of the universal, all-pervading Cause, does not exist. It would completely set aside the Jehovah of the Bible. If we can *know* any one finite thing to be independent, we can know that such a Being as our God is not in the heavens. If by creatures "such as we are" Dr. Breckinridge means creatures with our intuitions and beliefs, his proposition is true. Such creatures cannot realize in thought the finite as

independent or self-existent; cannot, in other words, even think the possibility of Atheism. It is not, however, that they must know all things in order not to know God; it is rather that they know nothing without knowing God—the Divine existence being as much the condition of cognition as the condition of existence.

Theology being the spiritual knowledge of God, and all the topics it embraces being only so many streams which empty into this ocean, Dr. Breckinridge has concentrated his energies upon the third book, which is devoted to the nature, perfections and glory of the Supreme Being. The design is to give the sum of what we actually know, and this is done in answer to two questions, Who is God? and What is God? that is, by a consideration of His names and His essence. He begins with the Names, and after explaining the grounds of their multiplicity and variety, unfolds those aspects of the Divine nature and perfections which they respectively involve. He then proceeds to the Essence of God, as manifested, first, in the mode of His existence, under which head the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity is carefully evolved, the Personality, Deity and Work of the Holy Ghost receiving especial and minute attention; and secondly, in the attributes of God, the classification of which has engaged Dr. Breckinridge's most earnest and patient labours. He has spared no pains to make his division exhaustive and complete. The central ideas are those of Being, Personal Spirit and Absolute Perfection. Personal Spirit branches out into two subdivisions, according as the notion of Intelligence or the notion of Rectitude predominates. We have, accordingly, five classes of attributes: 1. Those founded on the notion of Being—such as simplicity, infinity, independence, eternity. These the author calls Primary Attributes. 2. Those founded on the notion of Personal Spirit, which implies intellect, will and power. These the author calls Essential Attributes. 3. Those founded on that aspect of Personal existence in which intelligence predominates, in which the distinction between the true and the false deter-

mines the nature of the perfection. These the author calls Natural Attributes. 4. Those in which Will or Rectitude is the predominant idea, in which the perfection is determined by the distinction betwixt the good and the bad. These the author calls Moral Attributes. 5. And finally, we have another class of properties which are founded on the notion of absolute perfection—the *ens realissimum* or *ens perfectissimum*—these he calls Consummate Attributes. Around, therefore, the three central conceptions of Being, Spirit, Most Perfect Being, we have five circles of light and beauty constantly and eternally revolving; two being, as in Ezekiel's vision, wheels within wheels. Given the notion of God simply as being, and you have eternity, immutability, infinity, omnipresence and independence. Given God as a Spirit, you have intelligence, will, power; branching on the side of intelligence into infinite knowledge and wisdom; on the side of will, into holiness, justice, goodness and truth. Given God as a Most Perfect Being, and you have really and eminently all that is beautiful and glorious and blessed in every creature and condition, concentred infinitely and supremely in Him, the all-sufficient good, the plenitude of being, the fullness of excellence, the all-in-all. We think it but justice to the author that, in relation to this important portion of his work, he should be permitted to speak for himself:

"II.—1. The perfections of God are considered and treated in a separate manner, and are classified, only out of the necessity on our part, that we may, in this manner, contemplate God Himself more intelligibly. They are not, in fact, parts of God, nor faculties of God, but they are God Himself. When we mean to say that He knows all things, we express that idea by calling Him Omniscient; when we mean to say that He can do all things, we express that idea by calling Him Omnipotent; and as both of these facts are true universally, necessarily and inherently in God, we express that idea by saying these are Perfections or Attributes of God. And so of all His other Perfections.

"2. Now as God is manifest in all things, it is impossible even to conjecture in how many ways and upon how many objects He might or does make His Perfections known. In effect, every Divine Perfection is infinite: and the number of Perfections in an infinite being is also infinite—since He is subject to no limitation, and the aspects in which He is capable of manifesting Himself are illimitable. As everything He does has for its foundation something that He is, and as everything that He is can be conceived of in various relations to everything else that He is, the Perfections which in any particular aspect of His being can be shown to belong to Him are apparently boundless. Throughout His blessed Word the ascriptions of infinite perfections to Him scarcely admit of being numbered. In any systematic treatment of the subject, therefore, what is wanted is, not a vain attempt to enumerate the Divine Perfections and give names to them, but the discovery and clear statement of a method by which such of them as are known to us may be classified and contemplated by our finite understanding, in a manner consistent with its own nature and modes of obtaining knowledge.

"3. There are certain Perfections of God which may be contemplated as qualifying His very being, as well as all His other perfections—conditions, if I may so express myself, without which God, considered simply as God, cannot be said to have a being or any other perfection. Such are these —to wit: that He is Simple, Infinite, Independent, Self-existent, Necessary, Eternal, Incorporeal, Immaterial, Immense, Incomprehensible, having life in Himself. These, and the like, I would place in the first class, and call them the Primary Attributes; meaning thereby to express the idea that these Attributes cannot be separated from our conception of the true God; but that as soon as we say that such a being exists at all, we must necessarily imply that these and all such things are true concerning Him; because such a being as He is cannot exist except upon these conditions—as inseparable from His existence.

"4. There are other perfections of God which are neces-

sarily implied in the exercise by Him of many of those which I would call Primary Attributes, and which are also necessarily implied in the mode of His being as an Infinite Spirit—perfections without which we cannot conceive of His being a Spirit at all; nor conceive, if He is a Spirit, that He either lives or imparts life, or that He exerts any of His Primary Attributes. As He is a Spirit, and as He must conceive all that He does, He must have an Intellect: and as He is a Spirit, and as He does conceive and act, He must have a Will; and possessing an Intellect and Will, and acting at all, He must possess Power commensurate with His nature and acts. These I would place in the second class, and call Essential Attributes of God; intending thereby to express the idea that God, as He is not only God simply considered, but as He is God the infinite, eternal and unchangeable Spirit, must be endowed with Intellect, Will and Power—in a manner corresponding with His being and with His Primary Attributes. Now there are certain conditions to be predicated of these Essential Attributes of God, which express more distinctly the nature and extent of these perfections themselves; or which open to us, if we prefer to consider it so, additional perfections of God; and these can be viewed more distinctly by considering them as related in a manner more or less direct to these Essential Attributes. They are such as the following, to wit:

"(*a.*) As connected with the Divine Intellect:—That amongst God's Essential Perfections are a perfect Intuition of Himself and of all things else; that He is omniscient, having an unsearchable, incomprehensible and eternal insight of all that ever did, will or could be; that He is the Fountain of all Possibilities and all Ideas, and therefore of all Truth, and that from all eternity, and by an act of His illimitable Intelligence, so that it is not possible that He should err.

"(*b.*) As connected with the Divine will:—That, amongst the Essential Perfections of God are such as these, to wit: That His will is infinitely free, pure and active; that, spon-

taneously, by one act, and from eternity, in view of all things existing in His infinite understanding, His most perfect will determines all things; that seeing all motives, all possibilities, all ends and all means, the determinations of His will are complete, immutable and most sure; that nothing is possible except as He wills it, and that anything He wills is certain; and that He wills everything, not one by one, but all as a part of the boundless scheme which He proposes and the glorious ends He designs.

"(c.) As connected with the Divine power:—That God does and can do whatever does not in itself involve a contradiction; that His Power is of every kind, and extends to every object, and acts in every form and unto every end, and that throughout the universe and through eternity; so that no appreciable resistance can be conceived of to Him; and that no exertion or effort can be conceived of as being made by Him; He is omnipotent.

"5. There arises a third ground of distinction amongst the Attributes of God, as, advancing from the primary conception of Him merely as an Infinite and Self-existent being, we pass onward through the consideration of Him as an Infinite Spirit, and arrive at the view of Him in which He is to be contemplated as an Infinite Spirit under a particular aspect—namely, under the aspect of possessing the perfections of that boundless knowledge and wisdom which have relation to that special distinction which we call True and False. While it is certain that a spirit must possess Intelligence, and an Infinite Spirit must possess infinite Intelligence, yet the special relevancy of a particular kind of Knowledge and the special Wisdom connected therewith to a special aspect of His being, and to our special relations to Him, begets a complete and to us transcendently important distinction amongst the Perfections of God. Here it is founded, as I have observed, on the distinction of the *true* and *false:* in the next class upon the distinction of *Good* and *Evil.* The Perfections of the former kind I would place in the Third Class, and call them the Natural Attributes of God; partly

as expressing the nearest approximation of the nature of God to that of the creature, since of all spiritual things knowledge and wisdom are those in which the creature, which perceives the eternal and ineffaceable distinction between the true and the false, is naturally and universally most capable of growing; and partly, as expressing a distinction —more slight, between them and the class immediately preceding, and more marked between them and the class immediately following.

"6. In like manner when we conceive of this All-knowing and All-wise Spirit, which fills immensity, as taking notice of that distinction we express by the words *good* and *evil*, and as being actuated by such affections as Love and Aversion; and conceive of such qualities as Goodness and Mercy, or Anger and Wrath, as attending their exercise; and then conceive of these being all ordered in Justice, Truth and Long-suffering, it is very manifest that a view of Him is obtained different from any hitherto presented. I would therefore establish a Fourth Class, and refer to it such Perfections as Holiness, Goodness, Graciousness, Love, Mercifulness, Long-suffering, Justice, Truth and the like, and call them the Moral Attributes of God; meaning thereby such perfections as we find some trace of in our moral nature, and which all point to that eternal and ineffaceable distinction between good and evil already suggested.

"7. And finally, we cannot avoid perceiving that there are other conceptions of God, which cannot be contemplated without exhibiting Him to us in a manner different from any suggested in the four preceding classes. For there are views of Him which necessarily embrace everything—which necessarily show Him to us in the completeness of all His Perfections. I would, therefore, establish a Fifth Class, and refer to it what I will call the Infinite Actuosity of God—that is, the ceaseless movement of His Infinite Life; also His Infinite supremacy—that is, the consummate dominion of that Infinite Life of God; also His Omnipresence, His All-sufficiency, His Infinite Fullness or Infinitude, His con-

summate Perfection, His absolute Oneness and His unutterable Blessedness. And, as expressive of the particular ground of distinction in these Perfections, I would call them Consummate Attributes of God.

"8. According to this method we are enabled to contemplate God successively—1. As He is an Infinite Being, and endowed with the proper perfections thereof; 2. As He is an Infinite Spirit, and endowed with the proper perfections thereof; 3. As being both, and endowed with all perfections that belong to both, considered with reference to the eternal and ineffaceable distinction between true and false, which is the fundamental distinction with which our own rational faculties are conversant; 4. As being endowed with all perfections, considered with reference to the eternal and ineffaceable distinction between good and evil, which is the fundamental distinction with which our moral faculties are conversant; 5. As being endowed with all perfections which underlie, which embrace, or which result from, the union of all the preceding perfections. And so the classes of His perfections would necessarily be—1. Those called Primary Attributes—that is, such as belong to an Infinite and Self-existent Being, simply considered; 2. Essential Attributes—that is, those belonging to such a being considered essentially as an Infinite Spirit; 3. Natural Attributes—that is, such as appertain to an Infinite Spirit, considered naturally rather than morally or essentially; 4. Moral Attributes—that is, such as appertain to such a being, considered morally rather than naturally or essentially; 5. Consummate Attributes—that is, such as appertain to such a being considered completely and absolutely. To the development of these conceptions, and the demonstration of the Infinite Perfections of God as thus classified, the five following chapters will be devoted.—[Pp. 262–266.]"

Were we to venture a criticism upon this elaborate and careful classification of the Divine Attributes, we would suggest that the consideration of Spirit in its Personal unity, as involving intellect and will, might be dispensed with,

and that the enumeration should proceed at once to its obvious subdivisions. Nothing would be lost by this arrangement to the completeness of the catalogue, while much would be gained in the improvement of the nomenclature. *Primary* is certainly an unfortunate epithet to apply to the attributes of God, as it carries the intimation that some are secondary and subordinate. *Natural* is not the directest antithesis to moral. *Essential* and *Natural* are likely to be confounded. By the omission proposed, what the author calls *Primary* attributes he might denominate *Essential*—a word evidently appropriate to express the properties of a being in which existence and essence coincide. The second class of attributes, founded on the conception of Spirit as intelligent, might then be called *Intellectual*. The third, founded on the conception of Spirit as moral, might retain its present name. We should then have Essential, Intellectual, Moral and Consummate; and we are inclined to think that there is not a single perfection enumerated by the author, or capable of being conceived by the human mind, which may not be reduced to one of these four heads. Omnipotence may strike some as an exception. Accustomed to regard it as the simple energy of God's will directed by intelligence, they can find no place for it unless the capital idea of the Unity of Spirit is retained as a ground of division. But the truth is, it belongs to the Consummate Perfections of God, and the conception of it becomes not only grand but glorious, when it is contemplated as the fullness of God expressing itself in act, not only as a combination of intelligence and will, but a combination of intelligence, goodness and will—an energy of the Divine Life.

In the fourth book, which is devoted to a survey of all the sources of our knowledge of God—that is, of all the manifestations which God has made of Himself to man—the author has been most signally successful. Some portions of it we have read with feelings approaching to rapture. The theme is a grand one. Creation, Providence, Redemption, God's Works of Nature and Grace,—these are the mighty

theatres in which the Divine actor is presented. And surely it is a task of no common magnitude to write a drama, the plot of which shall be the unfolding, upon a scale worthy of His glory, of that awful and august Being whose prerogative it is, while essentially light, to dwell in thick darkness! Dr. Breckinridge felt the inspiration of the theme, and he who can rise from the contemplation of the picture he has drawn without a deeper sense of the majesty, sublimity, wisdom and goodness of God, without an impression of the Divine glory which gives a new lustre to the objects of nature and a richer significance to the history of man,—he that can study the seven chapters of this book and not be penetrated with the profoundest gratitude that he has been made capable of such conceptions as are successively brought before him, is insensible to all that is beautiful in poetry, lovely in art, and divine in truth. The legitimate effect would seem to be to make us blind to everything but God. We should see Him in the stars, hear Him in the winds, catch His smile in the calm serenity of the sky, and in the gayety of the fields discern the dim reflection of His goodness. Every dumb thing should become gifted with a tongue to proclaim its Maker's name. In the light of these discussions nature becomes an august temple which God dwells in and irradiates with His light; all created things a vast congregation of worshippers; and the glory of God, as it shines over all and upon all, is the burden of that mighty chorus of praise and doxology which is ever sounding in the ears of the Almighty from all above and all below. Who does not rejoice that such a God reigns? Who does not glory in this, that he knows and is capable of knowing such a Being? What meaningless things are we, and the sun and moon and stars, if supreme intelligence and love are banished from the world! It is Theology which puts life into natural science. Laws and phenomena are absolutely dead things if viewed only in themselves. They are mysterious hieroglyphics traced upon a wall or a monument, which exhibit marks of intelligence and design, but which human ingenuity has not yet

deciphered. The key is wanted to unlock their secrets. That key to nature is the knowledge of God. That makes the senseless symbol pregnant with meaning, the dead image instinct with life. The obscure characters of the heavens and the earth become radiant with light, and what to the eye of ignorance and unbelief was an incomprehensible scrawl —like a page of the Paradise Lost to a fly or a worm—become immortal scenes in the epic of eternal truth and providence. No wonder the whole congregation rose when Massillon pronounced those sublime words—God alone is great. And of all beings the blindest is that burlesque upon his species who can dwell in a world that is full of the Divine riches, where God surrounds him at every step and permeates with His influence every department of being, and yet he cannot see Him. He may congratulate himself upon his wisdom, but it is the wisdom of the dog, which sees only bright points in the firmament or green spots on the globe. The incapacity of the brute for science is precisely analogous to the incapacity of the fool for Theology; and astronomy and botany are not more simply and really explanations of the bright points and green spots to the natural philosopher, than the glory of God is the secret of these sciences to the man of spiritual discernment.

Dr. Breckinridge begins this book by a very precise expression of opinion in relation to the great problem of modern Philosophy: Are the Infinite and Absolute positive affirmations of intelligence, or are they simply negative and contradictory extremes of all positive thought? The question is, not whether we can comprehend the infinite, though that extravagance has been maintained, but whether we can *know* that the infinite exists as really and as truly as we know that the finite exists. Is it, in other words, an original datum of consciousness manifested in every cognition of the limited and conditioned? Dr. Breckinridge maintains that it is. He concurs with the great body of divines in ascribing to our conceptions of the infinite and absolute a positive and substantive value, involving the apprehension of existence,

but not the comprehension of the things in themselves. His conclusion is exactly that of Cousin in the latest form in which he expressed his doctrine, though not that of Cousin in the form in which it was so successfully combated by Sir William Hamilton. We have always thought that in this celebrated controversy both parties were wrong and both were right. Cousin was wrong in vindicating to reason an absolute comprehension of the Godhead; and Sir William's refutation of this doctrine is triumphant and complete. Sir William was wrong in denying the reality of the infinite to be a positive affirmation of intelligence, and resolving the belief of it into an impotence of mind to realize either of two contradictory extremes, though according to the laws of thought one had to be accepted as necessary. Cousin was wrong in maintaining that the relations of the finite and infinite are eternal, necessary and fully intelligible; Sir William wrong in maintaining that they are wholly and completely unknown. Cousin arrogated too much, Sir William too little, to intelligence. The tendency of philosophy with the one was to deny all ignorance; the tendency with the other to deny all knowledge. The truth here, as in most other cases, is in the middle—*in medio tutissimus ibis.* Partial knowledge and partial ignorance are the mingled inheritance of man. Of the infinite we know that it is, though we know not what it is. God is as essentially incomprehensible as He is inevitably apprehensible. In the pithy words of Charnock, who herein expresses the deep conviction of the Church of God in all ages: "Though God be so inaccessible that we cannot know Him perfectly, yet He is so much in the light that we cannot be wholly ignorant of Him. As He cannot be comprehended in His essence, He cannot be unknown in His existence; 'tis as easy by reason to understand that He is, as it is difficult to know what He is."

The conception of God, as the Absolute, in the sense of the fullness and perfection of being to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken—the totality, eminently or really, of all existence; the conception of God

as the Infinite, in the sense of an exemption from all restrictions and limitations either upon His essence or perfections, infinite because absolute and absolute because infinite, —this conception has not only ever been a positive and regulative principle of the human mind, but is an irresistible affirmation of the human reason. Even those who have denied to it, as Kant did, an objective reality, have been constrained to admit its subjective necessity. To say that God is wholly unknown, and wholly incapable of being known, is to annihilate the possibility of religion. The wholly inconceivable is relatively to us the wholly non-existent. When we say that the infinite cannot be comprehended, we mean much more than that our conceptions of it are inadequate and defective; we mean wholly to exclude it, as it exists in itself, from the domain of science. Its existence is an original and primary belief; its properties and relations, beyond partial manifestations in the region of the finite, transcend the sphere of Logic. Sir William Hamilton and Kant have shown, beyond the possibility of refutation, that nothing but contradiction emerges when we apply the laws of finite thought to what is confessedly above them. To bring the infinite within the sphere of the understanding is to limit, to define it; to think it as a term of syllogism is to condition it. It becomes one among many. Hence Boethius[1] was, in our judgment, right—Aristotle before him was right—in pronouncing a science of the infinite to be impossible. It implies a contradiction in terms. This principle, too much overlooked by divines, is pregnant with most important results in its bearing upon theological systems. It shows where we can reason and explain, and where we can only pause and adore. In every question which touches the immediate connection of the infinite with the finite, and the solution of which depends upon the comprehension of the infinite as a definite thing, it is intuitively obvious that the solution must be impossible; and every

[1] Quod autem ratione mentis circumdari non potest, nullius scientiæ fine concluditur; quare infinitorum scientia nulla est.

system which attempts the solution only degrades God to the form and stature of a man. There is in Theology a region which must be left to the dominion of faith; it can never be entered with the torch of Logic; and most fundamental errors proceed from a disregard of this significant fact, and are only abortive efforts to define the indefinable. The Socinian hopes by searching to find out God, and because he cannot think the Trinity according to the laws of Logic, he denies its existence. The Arminian vainly seeks to penetrate the depths of an infinite understanding, and because predestination and free will, in finite relations, do not consist, he extends his conclusion beyond the legitimate contents of his premises. He forgets that the same reason which intuitively gives us man's freedom, intuitively gives us God's prescience; and that the contradiction between them emerges only when, professing to think them as they are in God, we really think them as they would be in man. Upon no other ground than a total denial of any logical comprehension, and therefore, of any science, of the infinite, can the harmony of faith and reason be maintained. Whenever we directly touch the infinite, we must expect to encounter mystery, and a religion which has no mysteries is simply a religion that has no God. Dr. Breckinridge has devoted a chapter of surpassing beauty and interest to this whole subject. These conflicts betwixt faith and reason, or rather faith and our faculties of comparison, he calls the Paradoxes of the Gospel. He shows that they "are all to be found located along that line in which the infinite and the finite, the Divine and the human elements in religion, at once unite and are separated, and therefore all belong not so much to a separate consideration of any particular part of religion, as to a general estimate of religion as a system." He further adds, what harmonizes with all that we have said, "that the only method of their solution is the application to them of a simple evangelism and a thorough philosophy combined; for the lack of which, on the one side or the other, there is sometimes found so much extravagance,

and at other times so much shallowness, in the mode in which the most important truth is stated."—[p. 522.] Dr. Breckinridge fully appreciates the high and awful problems with which the soul of the believer has to grapple, and recognizes a Divine wisdom in faith which mocks the efforts of an earth-born philosophy. There are things to be believed and adored whose glory departs the very moment you compress them to the dimensions of any finite forms of thought. They spurn the bandages of logic. As well wrap a giant in the swaddling-clothes of infancy as these mysteries in the terms of argument. Man has nobler functions than to deduce and comprehend. Faith is before knowledge, and resumes its jurisdiction when knowledge ceases. Comprehension, after all, is a very narrow territory, bounded on all sides by an illimitable region of mystery—a region from which we emerge into the light of knowledge by faith, and when knowledge fails we fall back upon the guidance of faith again. As pertinent to this subject, the following passage from Dr. Breckinridge cannot fail to engage the attention and awaken the interest of the reader:

"4. We often speak of the difficulties of religion as presented in the works of infidels and heretics. But they are not worthy to be so much as once thought of when placed by the side of the difficulties which the soul of the true believer has mastered. Satan does not reveal his strength to his willing followers. The spirit which rests in the shallow doubts which outlie the wide frontiers of Divine truth never approaches the real problems over which the heart agonizes and before which the intellect recoils. If the inward struggles of any earnest Christian spirit in the progressive development of its Divine life were distinctly recorded, so that they could be carefully considered by others, they would show nothing more clearly than the utter insignificance and hollowness, the pitiable ignorance and baseness, of the common pretexts of unbelievers. These great spiritual battles are fought around and within these citadels—these strongholds of God, in each of which is entrenched one of these

great Gospel Paradoxes. And if our eyes were opened so that we could see at one glance the whole vanguard of the Church militant, we should behold encamped around or lodged within these very battlements the chief captains of the army of the Lord; some safely and serenely reposing on the bosom of Christ, having won the great victory; some discomfited, yet still renewedly girding themselves for the life-battle; some calmly watching and pondering till the signal falls for the new onset; some in the very heat and desperate grapple of the imminent deadly breach. Who can pass his eye, even in thought, around their glorious ranks without wonder and love and joy—without perceiving under a new aspect the high communion of the redeemed of God in this form of their union with and in Christ?

"5. It is a fatal error to imagine that we gain anything, either in the power or the distinctness of our spiritual experience, by avoiding these sublime meditations. And it is another error not less fatal to suppose that the Gospel is commended to the soul of man by our poor attempts to lower the terms of these grand paradoxes on one side or the other, or on both. The difficulty is not created by the Gospel: it lies in the infinite nature of the case, and in the eternal nexus wherein God stands related to His own universe. As I have intimated before, so much of the difficulty as can be solved at all can be solved only through the most intense application of the plan of Salvation to the most profound realities of the case—a result to which all superficial philosophy and all shallow evangelism, unitedly or separately, are utterly incompetent. Open them as bottomless chasms across the pathway to eternity, pile them up as impassable mountains in the way toward the New Jerusalem; and then you will not only tell the whole truth, but you will so tell it that the soul of man can both understand and believe it. It is after that only we can know, or that we care to know, how these mountains can be brought low, these valleys be filled, these rough places be made smooth, these crooked ones become

straight, and a highway be made for the Lord and for His redeemed.

"6. And after all it is not by means of the logical faculty that man escapes perdition. Our faith does not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. It is not merely—nay, it is not even chiefly—upon what we call our reason that the power of God's grace manifests itself in the new creation; and so it is not mainly, much less merely, by means of philosophy, no matter how pure and deep, that God can be fully comprehended, much less embraced."—[Pp. 522–524.]

It is not our purpose to follow Dr. Breckinridge through the detailed consideration of the sources of our knowledge of God. These are—Creation, Providence, Redemption, Man himself, and the Sacred Scriptures. As Dr. Breckinridge enumerates them, "God may be known as manifested in His works, God the Creator; He may be known as manifested in His dominion and reign, the God of Providence; He may be known as manifested in human nature, the Word made flesh; He may be known as manifested in the New Creation, God the Spirit; He may be known as manifested in Revelation, the God of the Sacred Scriptures; He may be known as manifested in the Conscious Existence of man, God the Maker and Renewer of the human soul."—[P. 330.] To each of these topics a chapter is devoted.

Up to this point the work has been mainly inductive; it has followed up successive streams of observation and of fact until they disembogued into the fullness of God. It commenced with a survey of man as consciousness and universal experience testify that he is. It then contemplated the revealed economy in reference to the recovery and redemption of our race, the inquiry still turning only upon facts. The particulars thus collected are all generalized into those manifestations of God which constitute the sum and substance of our knowledge of His name. Having inductively reached the conclusions of the third book, the fourth recapitulates

all the fields of observation which lie before us, and verifies the results which we have successively attained. Induction having by an ascending series conducted us to God, we then descend, in the way of what Dr. Breckinridge calls deduction, through the creation, primitive state and subsequent fall of man, to the condition in which we found him at the opening of the first book. His present ruin and misery are vindicated in the light of the principles previously established, "mortal existence and Divine truth are brought face to face," and the great problem of human destiny, as it relates to individuals and the race, calmly encountered. The questions discussed are among the most intricate that can occupy the mind of man. They cover the whole field of moral government in its essential and fundamental doctrines, and in the gracious modifications which it has assumed towards our race. Primeval Innocence, the Covenant of Works, the Entrance of Sin, the Fall of the Species, Election and Redemption,—this is the scale of descending inquiry which is measured in the book before us—these the momentous questions upon which we must bring to bear all that we know of God. These weighty topics are despatched in about sixty pages—a clear proof that the author, in rigid adherence to his method, has remitted the whole philosophy of the questions to his third part. He has confined himself mainly to a connected exhibition of Scripture facts and doctrines, with a reference here and there to the moral and psychological laws which are supposed to underlie them. The Covenant of Works, in its general features and specific provisions, he has ably presented, except that the precise nature of the change in man's relations to God, contemplated in the promise, is not expressly mentioned. That change was from a servant to a son. Adoption is the crowning blessing of both covenants—the rich prize offered to our race in the garden and secured to believers on the cross. Under the law of nature man was a subject and God a ruler. The Covenant of Works was an interposition of grace by means of which man might become a child and God a father, and

the filial relation supersede that of simple and naked law. This glorious adoption, which makes paternal love and goodness, instead of our own merits, the measure of our expectations and security—this priceless blessing which Adam failed to secure—is what Christ has won for us.

We could have wished that Dr. Breckinridge had dwelt more largely on the nature of sin, and particularly the first sin as involving essentially the notion of apostasy. If he had shown that, as a subjective state, it was a falling away from God, and contained seminally the elements of every species of transgression—that it was, in truth, the universal principle of sin—the malignity of Adam's guilt and the righteousness of God's judgment would have been more vividly impressed. These notions are implied, but they are not brought out with the prominence and emphasis that their importance deserves. Indeed, the whole question concerning the rise of sin in the mind of Adam, how a holy creature *could* sin—the beginning and the steps of the process—is not fairly and fully encountered. We are told that man, as a creature, was necessarily fallible, but Dr. Breckinridge is too good a logician not to know that *a posse ad esse non valet consequentia.* To say that man was created so that he might sin is not to say that he would sin. And when he has sinned, it is no explanation of the fact to say that he could sin. A man builds a house. To tell us that he could build it is not to tell us why he built it. The pinch of the question is, how Adam came to use his power to sin. He was able to stand or able to fall. Why did he choose the latter rather than the former? Freedom of will enters here only to connect responsibility with the act, to give it moral significance and value, but not to give the grounds of it. Dr. Breckinridge proceeds to enumerate the elements of wickedness which entered into Adam's first disobedience—"unbelief, inordinate desire of forbidden knowledge, presumptuous aspirations after equality with God, the pride of the eye, the lust of the appetite, the inordinate mutual devotion of loving hearts, credulity under skilful temptation"—but the ques-

tion is, how these elements ever got possession of a heart created in the image of God and delighting in spiritual conformity with His law. We wish that Dr. Breckinridge had given more attention to this profoundly interesting question—that he had resolutely undertaken to solve the phenomenon of the origin of sin in a holy being, or to show, upon philosophical grounds, that it is incapable of solution. Had he with his evangelical views grappled with it as Bishop Butler has done, he might have favoured us with more satisfactory results. That he has not done so is simply an omission, and an omission, perhaps, incidental to the nature of his plan.

It is with unfeigned reluctance that we differ from the author upon any subject. We have such profound respect for his judgment that whenever our opinions have not been in accordance with his we have felt that the presumption was against us, and that modesty and caution became us until we had thoroughly reviewed the grounds of our conclusions. Dr. Breckinridge is no rash thinker, and because he is no rash thinker we specially regret that we cannot concur with him in his views of hereditary depravity and imputed sin. We understand Dr. Breckinridge to teach that the native character of man is determined by the natural, and not by the federal, relations of Adam; that we are born sinners, because Adam our father was a sinner, and begat us under the law that like must propagate like. We understand him further as teaching that inherent corruption of nature is prior, in the order of thought, to the guilt of Adam's first sin, so that unless we were born sinners we could not be involved in his curse.[1] In direct contradiction to these state-

[1] The passages to which we refer are the following:

"4. I have shown in the previous chapter, when expressly considering the Covenant of Works, that the whole family of man was necessarily and was expressly embraced in its stipulations, and must, as the case might be, receive its reward or incur its penalty. Treating now of the penalty alone, it may be proper, before proceeding to the statement of the exact manner in which it was incurred by Adam, to point out precisely the grounds upon which, under the case as it stood, that penalty must em-

ments, the truth to us seems to be, that the moral character of the race is determined by the federal, and not by the natural, relations of Adam, and that inherent depravity is the judicial result, and not the formal ground, of the imputation of his sin. Natural headship, in our judgment, does

brace all his ordinary posterity in the same ruin which overtook him. There are two great facts, both of them clear and transcendent, which unitedly control the case. The *first* is, that Adam was the natural head and common progenitor of his race. The human family is not only of one blood, as has been proved in another place, but the blood of Adam is that one blood. The whole Scriptures are subverted, and human life is the grossest of all enigmas, if this be not true. If it be true, nothing is more inevitable than that whatever change may have been produced on the whole nature of Adam by his fall—of which I shall speak presently —before the existence of any of his issue, must have been propagated through all succeeding generations. If there is anything perfectly assured to us, it is the steadfastness of the order of nature in the perpetual reproduction of all things after their own kind. If the fall produced no change on the nature of Adam, it could produce none on the nature of his descendants. If it did produce any change upon his nature, it was his nature thus changed, and not the form of his nature before his fall, which his posterity must inherit."—[Pp. 487, 488.]

"(*a.*) Its first element is the guilt of Adam's first sin. By which is meant that on account of our natural and covenanted relations with Adam we are considered and treated precisely as we would have been if each one of us had personally done what Adam did. The guilt of Adam's first sin is imputed to his posterity. There is doubtless a wide difference between imputed sin and inherent sin. We, however, have both, and that naturally; and it tends only to error to attempt to explicate either of them in disregard of the other, or to separate what God has indissolubly united—namely, our double relation to Adam. It is infinitely certain that God would never make a legal fiction a pretext to punish as sinners dependent and helpless creatures who were actually innocent. The imputation of our sins to Christ affords no pretext for such a statement; because that was done by the express consent of Christ, and was, in every respect, the most stupendous proof of Divine grace. Nor is the righteousness of Christ ever imputed for justification, except to the elect: nor ever received except by faith, which is a grace of the Spirit peculiar to the renewed soul. In like manner the sin of Adam is imputed to us, but never irrespective of our nature and its inherent sin. That is, we must not attempt to separate Adam's federal from his natural headship, by the union of which he is the *root* of the human race, since we have not a particle of reason to believe that the former would ever have existed without the latter. Nay, Christ to become our federal head had to take our nature."—[Pp. 498, 499.]

nothing more than define the extent of federal representation. It answers the question, Who are included in the covenant? Those descending from Adam by ordinary generation. But apart from the idea of trusteeship, or federal headship, Adam, it appears to us, would have been no more than any other parent. There is nothing in the single circumstance of being first in a series to change the character of the relation, and no reason, therefore, why a first father, considered exclusively as a father, should have any more effect upon his issue than a second or third. The law of like begetting like is altogether inapplicable to the transmission of sin. That law contemplates the perpetuation of the species, and not the propagation of accidental differences. Every kind generates beings of the same kind, but there is no law which secures the reproduction of individual peculiarities. Now, sin and holiness are accidents of the soul. They do not pertain to its essence, they do not determine the species Man. The law of propagation, therefore, in itself considered, leaves these accidents to the influence of other causes. If Adam had not been a covenant head, we make no question that his posterity would all have been born in holiness, from the operation of the same cause by which he was created upright. But he having been a covenant head and having sinned and fallen, they are begotten under a judicial sentence which determines their moral state. They were born under the law of sin and death. We are aware that the doctrine of Dr. Breckinridge is the doctrine of Calvin, and that the chapter in our Confession of Faith, of the Fall of Man, of Sin and of the Punishment thereof, may be interpreted in the same sense; but the teaching of the catechisms we take to be clearly and unambiguously on our side. There the Imputation of guilt is direct and immediate, and the true explanation of the degraded condition of the race.

The thirty-third chapter, which is one of uncommon solemnity and pathos, first contemplates the human race as a collective whole, and takes a survey of the dealings of God for its restoration and recovery until the restitution of all

things. It then descends to the destiny of individuals, and considers their career in the light of the Divine decrees, and concludes the certain salvation of the elect and the certain perdition of the reprobate—both to the infinite glory of God. The whole history of the species, whether as a race or as individuals, is thus brought under review. The stream is followed from the bosom of God until it is lost in the fathomless depths of eternity. From man, in the first part of the book, we took our departure and found ourselves conducted to the knowledge of God; from God we took our departure a second time, and find our resting-place the endless issues of an immortal and changeless existence. Here the work properly stops. The last chapter, which we have already noticed, is not so much a part of the systematic knowledge as a philosophical explanation of the necessary limits within which that knowledge is restrained.

And now, having completed a general view of the whole treatise, we are, in some measure, prepared to form an opinion of the author's success in attaining the objects he aimed at—"that all confusion should be escaped, that all dislocation of truth should be avoided, that clear statements should become really convincing proofs, that the grand proportion of faith should reign without distortion, that the sublime science of God should emerge distinctly from the chaos of endless disputations, and that the unction of a glorious gospel should pervade the whole."—[P. xiv.] We think it may be safely said that he has realized his own ideal as far as it could possibly be done. He has collected with loving industry the scattered members of the mangled body of truth. He has joined bone to bone and limb to limb. He has brought up flesh and blood upon it. And as the image stands before us in loveliness and beauty, we are obliged to confess its Divine original, and can almost perceive the Spirit of God enter into it and impregnate it with Divine life. The unction of the book is above all praise. The author believes with the heart. Faith with him is knowledge, and knowledge is love. The doctrines of

the Gospel are not treated as cold and barren speculations. They are sublime and glorious realities, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. They are not matters about which the disputers of this world may wrangle and harangue, their existence depending upon the preponderance of probabilities, and their power standing in the wisdom of men. They are things to be perceived, certified by their own light, and authenticating their own being. Their power is the power of God. Dr. Breckinridge is never afraid of the truth. He never minces or prevaricates, nor handles the doctrines of grace, to use the comparison of Rowland Hill, like an ass mumbling a thistle. On the contrary, he reminds us of Cecil's inimitable description of Cadogan, who "seemed more like a man talking of what he saw, what he felt and what he kept firm hold of, than of what he had heard or read." Dr. Breckinridge, like him, follows with no wary step the teachings of Divine Revelation; knowing its foundations, "he stands upon it as on the everlasting hills." He fills his reader with that same holy sympathy which Cadogan is said to have propagated from the unction of his own soul, until he almost entranced his hearers, and "left them like Elisha, after the mantle was cast upon him, wondering what had so strangely carried him away from the plough and the oxen." We know of no book, ancient or modern, always excepting the divine compositions of John Howe, which can compare in spiritual pathos with the work before us. The author has succeeded in his wish —"the unction of a glorious Gospel pervades the whole."

The peculiarities of Dr. Breckinridge's teaching are, as we have seen, the separation of dogmatic from polemic theology, and the concatenation of the truths of religion upon the principle of ascent and descent, or induction and deduction. He aims to present them as a whole, and in joining them together he follows the line of experimental religion until it leads him to God, and then the line of the Divine counsels and operations until our history as a race and as individuals is closed in eternity. The question now recurs

—and it is one which vitally concerns the interests of theological instruction in this country—Should these peculiarities be copied? Is it best to teach the truth apart from its contrasts with error? And is it consistent with our conceptions of science to follow the order of actual discovery or actual development? We confess that we are skeptical on both points. Systematic divinity is an exposition of the truth as the Church of God holds it—an exposition of it in its dependencies and relations. The faith of the Church, as a body of doctrine distinctly apprehended and realized to reflection, is the product of many and protracted controversies, and all the creeds of Christendom, with the exception perhaps of that which goes by the name of the Apostles', are at once a confession of the truth and a protest against error. The terms in which the most important doctrines of Christianity are stated have been studiously selected, sometimes even invented, because of their implicit denial of some form of heresy and falsehood. We do not mean that the doctrine took its rise from these controversies, or that the people of God then first discovered it as lying in His Word. Nothing is of faith which is not in the Bible, and godliness from the beginning has been the moulding of the soul in the type of the Word. But there is a marked difference betwixt the spontaneous and reflective exercises of the mind. It is possible to know implicitly without knowing explicitly—possible to feel the power of an article and be controlled by its influence, without being able to represent in precise and definite expressions what is inwardly acknowledged. Heresy, in contradicting the spontaneous life of the Church, led to reflection upon the roots and grounds of that life. Reflection elicited the truth in the clear light of consciousness. And to preserve it, thus distinctly and precisely seized, as a lasting inheritance to all time, it was embalmed in language which derived much of its point from its relation to existing controversies. We do not believe that any one ever becomes explicitly conscious of what is meant by the word Trinity, three Persons in one God, until his attention has been turned

to the Arian and Sabellian heresies. He apprehends enough for devotion, but the full faith even of his own soul he is able articulately to state only in its contrasts to error. It requires, indeed, a very intense power of abstraction, the very highest exercise of genius, to take the truth which exists full and entire as a habit of the mind and represent it, in its integrity to consciousness, as an object of thought. All the aberrations of philosophy are only confessions of the difficulty which the human mind encounters in seizing and objectifying its own habitudes. As theological instruction aims at the head as well as the heart, we are inclined to think that a steadier and firmer grasp is given of the truth by distinguishing it in the very process of teaching from every species of lie. The lie is itself an impulse to reflection. It contradicts our inner life, and we are enabled more readily to lay hold upon what God has impressed on us by His Spirit. We see the Word in relations of which we had not previously been apprised. A new light is imparted to it. This is the method of the New Testament. Paul, like the builders at Jerusalem, with one hand always wrought in the work and with the other held a weapon; and John is as particular to warn against false Christs as to commend the love and grace and mercy of the true one. It seems to us that the same law which, in a theological system, would exclude polemics from the sphere of positive teaching would remit, in a moral system, the consideration of vices to a different part of the system from that which treats of virtues. The science of contraries is one. We suspect that Dr. Breckinridge will find from experience that his third part will be the part in which he is most successful in making skilful theologians. He may edify more in the first, he will teach more in the third. The first part may be more impressive, the third will be more precise and accurate. The first may strike by the grandeur of the whole, the third will interest by the clearness of the details. The first will be more subservient to devotion, the third to intellectual apprehension. Still, we cannot regret that Dr. Breckinridge has produced

the book under review. The qualities of his mind have ensured to his method a success in his hands which it were vain to expect from an humbler source. None of the disciples can imitate the master, and if our seminaries should undertake to introduce this mode of teaching as the general plan, the result would soon show that we must either have a Dr. Breckinridge in each one of them or send out anything but accurate divines.

As to the principle upon which Dr. Breckinridge has concatenated the various topics of Theology, it is a natural corollary from the total exclusion of polemics. We can conceive of no order in which the doctrines of spiritual religion, considered in their positive aspects, could be more impressively presented. It is the order of the development of the Divine life. But if Theology is to be reduced to the forms of a reflective science, and the truth to be unfolded in its contrasts with error, it is very desirable that some method should be adopted—a thing that has never been done yet, not even by those who have made the most confident pretensions to it—that shall reduce to unity all the doctrines of religion. There must be a ground of unity somewhere, for truth is one as well as connected. This unity must be sought in the doctrines themselves, and not in their accidents and adjuncts. It is easy to connect Divine truths by the idea of the Covenants; or by the correlation of disease and remedy, the fall and redemption; or by the order of the Divine decrees as manifested in creation and providence; or by the idea of the Mediator or the incarnation; but to connect them is not to unite them. We want a corner-stone which holds the whole building together. We want some central principle which embraces equally the religion of nature and the religion of grace. Until some such central principle is developed in its all-comprehensive relations, we are obliged to have a twofold Theology, as we have a twofold religion —a Covenant of Works and a Covenant of Grace—with no bridge between them.

It seems to us—and we make the suggestion with all

proper diffidence—that such a principle is found in the great doctrine of justification, which, in more respects than one, deserves the commendation of Calvin, "*præcipuum esse sustinendæ religionis cardinem.*"—[Inst. Lib. iii., c. xi., § 1.] The only systems of religion which God has ever revealed to man consist of the answers which Divine Wisdom has given to the question, How shall a subject of moral government be justified? When that subject is considered simply as a creature in a state of innocence and blessed with the image of God, the answer is, The religion of nature; if that subject is considered as a fallen being, as a sinner, the answer is, The religion of grace. All the provisions of either covenant are subordinated to the idea of justification. They are directed to it as their immediate end, and find their respective places in the system according to their tendency to contribute to its accomplishment. This is the centre around which every other doctrine revolves, and none can be understood fully and adequately apart from their relations to it. Let us consider this matter a little more distinctly.

Justification, it should first be remarked, is not an original or essential principle of moral government. That implies nothing more than the relations of a ruler and a subject through the medium of moral law. It contemplates no change of state, and proposes no alternative but uniform obedience or death. Each man is looked upon simply as an individual, a moral unit, whose responsibility terminates upon himself alone, and whose trial is coextensive with the whole career of the immortality of his being. The law, as such, can never raise him beyond the condition of a servant. It can never relax the contingency of his life. It can never put him beyond the reach of death. Do, and while you do, and as long as you do, you live, is the only language which it can employ. It knows no state of final rewards. Under it there may be perpetual innocence, but there never can be justification. If the relations of law are the only ones which are essential to moral government—and that is obviously the case—it is clear that justification is a superadded

element, a provision of infinite goodness and love, which modifies essentially the condition and prospects of man. The case seems to be this: God has never been willing to sustain only legal relations to His moral and intelligent creatures. While the very law of their being, as creatures absolutely dependent upon His will, puts them necessarily in this state, His love has always proposed to raise them higher, to bring them nearer to Himself, to make them children and heirs. He has always proposed a fundamental change in their attitude toward Him, and that change has consisted in the adoption of sons—in the substitution of filial for legal ties. Instead of an empire of subjects, Infinite Goodness has aimed at a vast family of holy, loving, obedient children. To be admitted into God's family is to be confirmed in holiness, to have life put beyond the reach of contingency, to be for ever like the Lord. It is to be entitled to higher and richer and more glorious joys than any legal obedience could ever aspire to obtain. The doctrine of justification has been engrafted upon the fundamental principles of moral government, in order to provide the way by which a being that exists necessarily at first in a legal, may be promoted to a filial, relation. It is the expedient of Heaven for making a servant a son. Now, that there may be justification, probation must be limited as to time. Probation must be ended before the subject can be pronounced righteous or entitled to the reward. What an act of goodness is this! Each man might have been put on an endless trial. Life might for ever have been at hazard. In the actual provisions for justification which God has applied to our race, the trial has not only been limited as to time, but concentrated as to persons. One stood for all—another provision, rightly understood, of infinite goodness. Hence Federal Headship; and those who cavil at the representative character of Adam would do well to remember that they had no right to any limited trial at all, and if God chose to limit it in one respect, He not only had a right to limit it in any other, but that the probability is that if it had not been

limited in both respects, all would have fallen, and fallen without hope for ever. Every provision of the Covenant of Works is, therefore, a provision of spontaneous grace. But it is equally obvious that all these arrangements have been instituted to realize the idea of justification.

The same result takes place in reference to the religion of grace. The question now is, How shall a sinner be just with God? And the answer to that question, in consistency with the essential principles of moral government and the requisitions of the broken Covenant of Works, necessitates all the provisions of the Covenant of Grace. They are all directed to this as their immediate end—that God may be just, and at the same time justify those who are without works. Hence the incarnation; hence the mysterious and wonderful Person of the Saviour; hence His amazing humiliation, His life of poverty, sorrow and self-denial, His death of agony and shame; hence His glorious resurrection and ascension, and His coming at the last day to judge the quick and the dead. All the facts of His history and mediation depend upon God's purpose to justify sinners through His name. And as justification is the ground or basis of adoption, the sinner who is justified becomes at once a son and is entitled to the blessing of indefectible holiness. He becomes an heir, and has an indefeasible right to the heavenly inheritance. His life—that is, his holiness—becomes as certain to him as Adam's life would have been to his posterity if he had kept his first estate. Hence justification necessitates the whole work of the Spirit in the renovation and sanctification of the heart; converts the present life into a discipline in which our sins are treated as faults to be corrected, and not as crimes to be punished; and ensures the perseverance of the saints, the resurrection of the body from the grave at the last day, and the full and complete preparation of the whole man for his eternal weight of glory. Well, therefore, may justification be called the article of a standing or falling Church. It is the key to all of God's dealings with man.

This rapid sketch sufficiently indicates the grounds on

which we regard justification as the dogmatic principle which reduces to scientific unity the whole doctrine of religion. It is common to both covenants, and it is evidently the regulative idea of both. It presupposes the fundamental conceptions of moral government, of law, of personal and individual responsibility. It implies that the legal cannot give way to the filial relation without a trial of the creature. To establish such a trial it modifies probation, imposes limitations both as to time and persons, and introduces the notion of Federal Representation. After the fall it presides over the economy of grace, and determines the nature and extent of every provision which this stupendous scheme involves. It is the bow which spans the whole hemisphere of grace. As the law of method in theological treatises, it certainly seems to be exhaustive and complete. It has also the advantage of cutting up by the roots false systems of divinity. They cannot be reduced upon it. It throws off Arminianism, Pelagianism, and every theology which leaves life contingent and resolves acceptance into mere pardon. It throws off all such schemes as foreign to its own spirit. It plants the feet of the saints upon a rock, and in itself and its adjuncts it may well be styled the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

PREFATORY NOTE.

This Discussion of the Divine Personality was published in the Southern Presbyterian Review for October, 1861. It had been delivered previously by invitation in Milledgeville, Georgia, at the Commencement of Oglethorpe College. The author first sets forth beautifully and forcibly what is involved in the notion of a personal God in opposition to Pantheism, and then proceeds to show the effects of admitting and of rejecting the doctrine, upon Science, upon Morals, upon Religion, and upon the credibility of Revelation.

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

SIMONIDES the poet, when questioned by Hiero the king concerning the nature of God, demanded a day for consideration. The question being repeated at the expiration of the time, he begged to be allowed two days longer, and after having frequently evaded an answer by still prolonging the period of deliberation, he was at length required by the king to give a reason for this strange procedure. Simonides, who was a philosopher as well as a poet, gave the pregnant reply, that the longer he thought upon the subject the greater was the difficulty of a satisfactory answer. Obscurities multiplied to reflection. "Behold, God is great," says Job, "and we know Him not, neither can the number of His years be searched out." The inscription upon the altar at Athens which furnished Paul with a text for his memorable sermon on Mars Hill, contains a confession of ignorance which can never cease to be true until God ceases to be infinite and we the creatures of a day. He must ever be not only the unknown, but the unknowable God. "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

In striking contrast with these representations of antiquity we have a modern statement that the very essence of God is comprehensibility—that it is His nature to be known, and

that only in so far as He is intelligible can He be said to have real existence.

To explain how such contradictory conclusions have been arrived at, we must understand the problem which, from the dawn of speculation, philosophy has set herself to solve, and the methods by which she has conducted the investigation. The point has been to unfold the mystery of the universe—to tell whence it came and how it has been produced. Being in itself and being in its laws—the causes and principles of all existing things—the great master of ancient speculation makes to be the end and aim of that science which he dignifies as wisdom. It is clear that, in every inquiry into causes and principles, the final answer must be—God. He is pre-eminently the Being from whom all other beings spring, and the constitution of the universe must be referred to Him as the ground and measure of its existence. In this general answer which resolves everything at last into God, every philosophy which deserves the name, whether in ancient or modern times, has concurred. They all end in Him. But when they undertake to answer the further question, what He is and how all things centre in Him, they come to different results, according to their different views of the nature of the universe, and its relation to its first principle or cause.

According to Aristotle, those who first philosophized on the subject directed their attention to the principle of things, defining a principle as that of which all things are, out of which they are first generated, and into which they are at last corrupted; the essence remaining, though changed in its affections. What this essence was—this nature of things—whether one or many, the philosophers were not agreed. The language employed by Aristotle in recounting early opinions, and the subsequent history of philosophy, suggest different views of the nature of the universe: 1. It may be regarded as an organic whole, similar to the body of an animal or the structure of a plant; and then, as the law of its being would be simply that of development, we could

easily explain its phenomena if we could only seize upon the germ from which it was gradually unfolded. The inquiry in this aspect is into the ἀρχή, the seminal principle, and its law of manifestation and of growth. Given this principle in itself and in its law of operation, and the problem of the universe is solved. You find God, who is at once the commencement and the complement of being. 2. Or the universe may be regarded as a complex whole, a unity made by composition and mixture, consisting of parts entirely distinct in themselves, and held together by some species of cohesion. In this aspect the problem is, What are the elements of which it is compounded, and how are they sustained in union and combination? The answer here might be atheistic or not, according as the doctrine of efficient causes was excluded or rejected. The ancient arguments for Theism proceeded, for the most part, upon this conception of the universe, and postulated the necessity of a designing mind and a controlling Providence upon the arrangements of matter. The universe was a vast and complicated machine, which required mind to construct it and mind to regulate its movements. Or, 3. The universe may be regarded as absolutely an unit, a single being, whose essence or nature determines its phenomena as if by logical necessity. There is a something which is the substratum of all properties—in which they inhere, and from which they are derived, as qualities are dependent upon substance; and when this essence, which is synonymous with being, has been discovered, we have found God. He is the essence of all things. They are only manifestations or properties of His infinite substance. This, it is needless to add, is the most ancient form of the philosophy of the absolute.

Modern schools of philosophy have pursued essentially the same tracks in explaining the mysteries of being. The most striking difference is not in relation to the problem to be solved, but in relation to the point from which the investigation takes its departure. Ancient speculation fast-

ened on the objective and material, and its principles and causes were primarily, as Aristotle remarks, in the species of matter. Modern speculation begins with consciousness, and, confounding thought with existence, reality with knowledge, has made the laws of thought the regulative and constitutive principles of being. God is nothing but the complement of primitive cognitions—the collection of those fundamental ideas which are involved in every act of spontaneous consciousness, and whose nature it is not only to be intelligible, but to furnish the conditions of the intelligibility of everything besides. The characteristic of all the systems, whether ancient or modern, which make God figure at the head of their various theories as cause, principle, or law, and which resolve all phenomena into manifestation, combination, or development, is the stern necessity to which they reduce everything. Pantheism and Positivism, how much soever they may differ in other respects, unite in the denial of a Personal God. They consequently exclude, with equal rigour, the possibility of morals and religion, and shift the grounds of the certainty of science. It is the Personal God, whose name we regard with awe and veneration, whose throne is encircled with clouds and darkness, and who must for ever be the unknown God. He is the great mystery which, once admitted, throws light upon everything but the depths of His own being. He is the Infinite One who, transcending all the categories of thought and mocking the limits of all finite science, can only be adored as a Being past finding out. He is the God whom human nature has spontaneously acknowledged. It is a corrupt philosophy, and not the dictate of humanity—a spirit of bold and presumptuous speculation, and not the instinctive voice of the human spirit—that has replaced Him with a law, a principle or an element. So radical and all-pervading is this truth of the Personality of God—so essential to all the dearest interests of man—that we propose to make it the subject of a more distinct consideration.

I. It may be well to begin by explaining what is involved

in the notion of a *Personal God*. What is it, in other words, to be a Person?

A definition of a simple and primitive belief is not to be expected. We may describe the occasions on which it is elicited in consciousness, or the conditions on which it is realized, but the thing itself is incapable of being represented in thought. We have, for example, a belief of power and of substance, and we can detail the circumstances under which the belief is felt, but the power and substance we are incompetent to define; they are to us the unknown causes of effects which we experience. So it is with Person; what it is in itself, what constitutes and distinguishes it, we cannot comprehend; but there are conditions on which the belief of it, as the unknown and inexplicable cause of obvious phenomena, is developed in consciousness. These conditions, as the necessary adjuncts of the natural and spontaneous belief, we are able to apprehend.

1. The first circumstance which distinguishes this notion is that of individuality. The notion is developed only under the antithesis of something different from itself which takes place in every act of consciousness. Every instance of knowledge is the affirmation of a self on the one hand, and a something which is not self on the other. There is the subject knowing, and the object known. A man believes his own existence only in believing the existence of somewhat that is distinct from himself. He affirms his personality in contrast with another and a different reality. When, therefore, we assert the Personality of God, we mean to affirm that He is distinct from other beings and from other objects. We mean to affirm that He is not the universe, either in its matter or form, its seminal principle or final development. He is essentially separate from it. His substance is in no sense the substance of the things that we see. He might have existed, and through a past eternity did exist, without them. They are objects to Him as a subject—no more parts of His own being than the material world is a part of ourselves. This notion of individuality is essential to every

conception of the Deity, which enables him to use the pronoun I. An absolute Being cannot be a person. The God of Pantheism cannot say, "I will" or "I know"—and the notion of such a being ever reaching the stage of what the absolute philosophers call self-consciousness is a flagrant contradiction in terms. When subject and object are identified, there can be no consciousness, no knowledge. When they are carried up to indifference, the result is personal extinction.

2. But, though individuality is a necessary adjunct of the notion of person, it is not always a necessary sign of its existence. There may be individuals that are not persons. The trees which we see around us, the plants and animals that cover the surface of the globe, are all individuals, but they are not persons. There are other conditions essential to the development of the notion: these may be reduced to two—intelligence and will, or intelligence and conscience. Self is affirmed only in consciousness, and consciousness is the property only of intelligence. A being that cannot reflect and attribute its thoughts or impressions to itself, that cannot say, "I think," "I feel," "I believe," cannot be regarded as a person. It is probable that the brute has no reflective consciousness. He has present states, but does not distinguish in the spontaneous feeling the antithesis of subject and object. This is possibly the condition of infancy also. But the dignity and full significancy of the notion of person are developed in the sphere of morals, in which man is regarded as the subject of rights and the responsible author of his own actions. To be a person is to be one who can regulate his motions according to a law, and who feels that there are certain things which he can justly claim as his own. He who can say, "I have a right," evinces himself, in the highest sense, to be a true and proper person. Hence, as morals are conversant only about voluntary states and acts, the doctrine has become common that personality is seated exclusively in the will; but this narrow and restricted view puts asunder what God has joined

together. Intelligence and responsibility can never be divorced, and though it is in the sphere of duties and of rights that the importance of self becomes most conspicuous, yet the simplest act of knowledge cannot possibly take place without the recognition of it.

3. Another thing equally essential to self-hood is the feeling of absolute simplicity. It cannot be divided or separated into parts. Consciousness is an unit—responsibility is an unit. Every person is not only separate from every other being, but is incapable of discerption in himself.

When, therefore, we maintain the Personality of God, we mean distinctly to affirm that He is an absolutely simple intelligence, possessed of consciousness and will, who acts from purpose and from choice, and is not to be confounded with any of the creatures of His hand. He is not a blind fatality, not a necessary principle, not a necessary law. He has every attribute which we recognize in ourselves as beings of reason and of will. It is pre-eminently in our personality, and the qualities which perfect and adorn it, that the image of God consists in which man was originally formed, and this is the immense chasm betwixt us and the other creatures that inhabit this globe.

The plant has life and sensibility; the brute is capable of perception and motion, and exhibits perhaps some rude traces of dawning intelligence. But neither plants nor brutes have anything approximating to the feeling of self-consciousness. Neither can rise to the affirmation of a self, and neither is the subject of rights or duties. But to man it belongs to say, "I," "Me," and in this respect he resembles the God that made him. But while the essence of the Divine image consists in the property of personality, the perfection of that image consists in the knowledge, righteousness and holiness which invest a person with all its dignity and excellence. All retain the essence—none but the redeemed have now the qualities that adorn. It is still true that God has set His eternal canon against murder, because the life which is violently taken away is the

property of him who as a person still resembles his Maker, and has rights which cannot with impunity be disregarded. Take away from man his personality, and the destruction of a human being would be no more serious a thing than the slaughter of a beast. It is the sanctity which is thrown around a person as the reflection of the Divine glory that makes it so awful a thing to be a man. He who can say, "Myself," is immeasurably nearer to God than any other form of being. He is not only from God, but like Him—not only carries impressions of the Divine character, as the sun, the moon and the stars, but carries in his bosom resemblances of the Divine attributes. We are not only His creatures, but His offspring, and, regulating our thoughts of Him by the analogies of our own nature, "we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." We should rise to the conception of His majesty as of One that made the world and all things therein—of One who as Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

This statement of the conditions under which the notion of personality is realized will correct the error into which the ignorant and unreflecting are apt to fall, of confounding it with figure or material shape. We apply the term *person* so constantly to our bodies that there is an imperceptible tendency to make the possession of a body essential to personal existence. But a little consideration will convince us that our bodies belong to us, but are not ourselves. We use them, and act through them and by means of them. They are organs and instruments, but have not a single characteristic of personality. It is not the eye that sees, but the man that sees by means of the eye; it is not the ear that hears, but the man that hears through the instrumentality of the ear; it is not the leg or the foot that walks, but the man that walks by its help. These organs may be destroyed, and yet the power of vision, of hearing, of motion remain in full integrity. They cannot be exercised for the want of the proper appliances, but they are there, and could simi-

lar organs be replaced might be easily called into action. In affirming, therefore, a personal we are not affirming a material God, bounded by any outline of figure or shape or circumscribed to any space. We affirm a Spirit who is essentially self-conscious, whose essence is knowledge, holiness, power and life—a Spirit infinite, eternal, unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. We affirm the existence of that great Being who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers—that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in—that great Being who dwelling in glory and light inaccessible, the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, permits us to behold the skirts of His robe in the analogies of finite personalities. We can catch a glimpse of Him, but we cannot see Him, and the overpowering force of that glimpse causes us to fall back in ourselves exhausted and wearied under the mighty idea of God. He alone is great, He only doeth wondrous things.

II. The difference is immense between the admission and rejection of such a Being in every department of thought and of action.

1. Speculation, equally with practice, changes its character according to the nature of the Divinity that terminates its inquiries. Upon the hypothesis of Pantheism, or any hypothesis which construes God into a logical, physical or metaphysical necessity, the relation of the finite to the infinite can only proceed, as a great living writer has observed, upon the supposition of the immanent, or, more correctly speaking, of substantial identity. Given this pervading essence, this principle of being, and all things can be deduced from God with as rigorous certainty as the propositions of geometry from the definitions of the science. He being what He is, they must be what they are. He is necessary cause, they, necessary effect; He, necessary substance, they, its necessary affections. It is obvious that upon this theory all science must be *a priori* and deductive, and

Spinoza was consulting the exigencies of his system full as much as the spirit of the age in reducing his philosophy to the forms of mathematical demonstration. The case is very different upon the supposition of a personal God. There, the universe is the product of will. It is an effect which might or might not have been; its nature and constitution are alike contingent—all depends upon the choice, the purpose, the plans of the Creator. Philosophy becomes an inquiry into the designs of God, and these designs, as in every other case, must be determined by the appearances submitted to the scrutiny of experience. We have no data to determine beforehand what kind of a thing the world should be, what kind of creatures it should contain, by what kind of physical laws it should be governed. We could not construct it from any principles upon which the understanding might seize. The simple circumstance that it and all its phenomena are contingent puts it beyond the reach of philosophical anticipation, and establishes at once the method of induction as the only method of inquiry. Speculation, upon this hypothesis, is the reduction to unity of the facts of observation, the elimination of the laws which create and preserve the order which the will of God has established. Though the universe is a contingent effect, it is not the offspring of caprice or arbitrary power. In ascribing it to a personal God we ascribe it to a Being who is possessed of wisdom and knowledge, and whose will is always determined by the infinite perfections of His character. We may expect, therefore, to find a plan which is worthy of this august and glorious Being, and we can pronounce with confidence beforehand that whatever is essentially contradictory to wisdom, goodness and truth cannot enter into the scheme. But when the question arises as to the concrete realities that shall positively be called into being, man can know, either in the world of matter or of mind, only what he has observed. In a personal being you introduce the operation of a free cause; power becomes will, and the only necessity which is conceivable is that of acting from design.

The whole problem of philosophy becomes changed, the absolute is resolved into a metaphysical absurdity, and a principle of existence apart from the omnipotent will of a creator is a mere delusion. Hence the Scriptures recognize God in everything. It is His almighty arm that sustains the fabric of the universe. He projected and keeps in their orbits those planets, suns and adamantine spheres wheeling unshaken through the void immense. It is His to create the sweet influences of the Pleiades and to loose the bands of Orion. All things live and move and have their being in Him; but not in Him as part and parcel of His own existence, not as the properties or developments of His nature; only as the products of His will, which are absolutely nothing without that will. God's purpose, this is the only principle of being which the Bible recognizes. The counsel of His will, this is the goal of philosophy—the last point which science is capable of reaching. All our inquiries end at last in the confession, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight." "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever! Amen."

We regret that we have not time to enter more at length into this discussion, and to show how the deductive and inductive methods of philosophy are essentially dependent upon the admission or rejection of the Personality of God. Many who are enamoured with what appears to them to be a very profound and earnest philosophy of life, are not aware that the very spirit in which that philosophy is born is at war with the first principles of Theism. They do not see that any theory which involves a necessary principle of the world excludes contingency, and, consequently, the operation of all will. It is clear, too, that this principle, if it exists, must be sought in consciousness. As thought, upon the hypothesis in question, must be the reflection of existence, and as we ourselves are a species of microcosm, we must look into the depths of our own souls for those great, controlling elements which determine the existence of everything around us. We shall surely be able to find those fundamental and

unquestionable data, stored away in the recesses of our minds, which shall contain the absolute explanation of everything—those laws or primitive cognitions which belong to and constitute the Eternal Reason. We shall be able, in other words, to find the only God that can exist, in ourselves. What Madame de Staël said of Fichte, that he announced the purpose of a future lecture in these atrocious words—"We shall proceed to make God"—is perfectly in keeping with the whole genius and temper of a speculation that expects to find any other nexus but that of a personal will between the finite and the infinite.

The question of a personal God might well be suspended upon the results, in science, to which its method of investigation has led. Bacon expounded the law, and since Bacon what has not been accomplished? There is not a conquest in the world of matter or of mind which has not been won by the spirit of the inductive philosophy. It has explored every nook and corner of nature; it has trusted to nothing but its eyes and ears, and those eternal laws of thought which constitute the forms of knowledge. It has found order, law, a plan; it has discovered design, the operations of intelligence and will, and penetrated beyond nature to nature's God, as the author and finisher of all. It has seen and known. What, on the other hand, has Pantheism done? Nothing, absolutely nothing, but transmute into its own jargon the laws which induction has established. The empirical, indeed, it despises; but, unfortunately, the empirical is all that exists; and in despising that it destroys the possibility of any real science of things. To sum up all that we would say in a few words, experimental philosophy is grounded in the hypothesis of a personal God. The Jehovah of the Bible is presupposed in the method of induction. The method of pure speculation is grounded in the hypothesis of a necessary cause or principle, and identity of substance is presupposed in its methods of inquiry. The nexus between the finite and the infinite in the one case is will, and will alone; in the other, it is that of immanence or in-

being. The universe, according to one, is the product of Divine power; according to the other, it is God Himself, coming into sensible manifestation—the chicken hatched from the egg. The problem of philosophy in one case is to discover the plan of God as gathered from the actual operations of His hands; according to the other, the very notion of a plan or design becomes an insoluble contradiction. According to the one, man knows nothing until he has learned from observation and experiment; according to the other, he carries the elements of omniscience in his bosom. This is a faithful picture of the spirit and genius of the two systems. Judge them by their fruits.

2. The two systems are equally in contrast in their influence upon the whole department of moral obligation. According to the scheme of Theism, the relations betwixt God and man are those of a ruler and a subject—all intelligent beings are under authority and government. They are placed in subjection to a law which they are bound to obey, but which they are at liberty to disregard; and their happiness or misery is dependent upon their obedience or disobedience. The simplest—perhaps the most primitive—notion which we are able to form of the Father of spirits is, as Butler suggests,[1] that of "a master or governor. The fact of our case, which we find by experience, is that He actually exercises dominion or government over us, at present, by rewarding and punishing us for our actions, in as strict and proper a sense of these words, and even in the same sense, as children, servants, subjects are rewarded and punished by those who govern them." This is not so much, says the same great thinker, a deduction of reason as a matter of experience, that we are under His government in the same sense that we are under the government of civil magistrates. All this is obviously inconsistent with the theory of Pantheism. The ruler and the ruled must be distinct; and yet, upon the hypothesis in question, they are essentially the same, only under different manifestations or in different

[1] Anal., Pt. I., ch. ii.

stages of development. A law is a measure of conduct prescribed by a superior will, and the notions which underlie it are those of rightful authority on the one hand, and the possibility of obedience or disobedience on the other. Both these notions are discarded by Pantheism; and, as it deprives us of will, so it leaves us no other law but that of the necessary evolution of phenomena. It demands on the one hand an inviolable necessity, and on the other a rigid continuity. Obligation is the correlative of law, and rewards and punishments are the expressions of merit and demerit. But justice is utterly annihilated; reward, as distinct from mere pleasure—punishment, as distinct from mere annoyance or pain—becomes unmeaning. All moral differences in actions are contradictory and absurd where the effect is a necessary manifestation or an inevitable development. Sin as moral disorder or evil cannot be conceived; it becomes only one step in the stage of events—a contrast in individual life or the history of the world, by which the balanced harmony of a complicated system is preserved. It is no more liable to blame than the bitterness of wormwood or the filth of grease; and he who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seeks for glory, honour, and immortality is no more entitled to praise or to eternal life than sugar for being sweet or milk nutritious. These are only parts and parcels of the grand world-process. Good and evil occupy the same position as light and darkness, or any other contrasts in nature. Sin, as a transgression of the law deserving death, is a pure fiction. The system, therefore, in obliterating moral distinctions and reducing the differences of right and wrong to the category of necessary contrasts, not only makes war upon the government of God, but aims a decisive blow at the governments of man. It is in deadly hostility to the principles which hold society together and impart to States their authority. Strike out justice and moral law, and society becomes the mere aggregation of individuals, and not their union by solemn and sacred ties upon the basis of mutual rights and duties; and man ceases to be anything

but a higher class of beast. Every being works out its destiny by the same resistless process. These conclusions could be verified by a copious appeal to the best and purest philosophers who have speculated upon morals in the spirit of Pantheism. The accomplished Schleiermacher could make no more of sin than Fichte or Hegel. The deepest convictions of conscience, the most earnest utterances of the soul, the sense of guilt and demerit, the ineffaceable impression of justice, he was obliged to explain away in obedience to a system which, in the extinction of a personal God, had removed the centre around which alone these sentiments could find place. They are, indeed, memorials of a personal God which never can be totally destroyed. We feel that we are under law, that we are responsible for our actions, that we are capable of praise or blame. We feel that there is a right and a wrong in human conduct; and no sophistry can eradicate, in some of its manifestations, the sense of justice. So clear is the connection between God and our moral nature that we can never get quit of the notion of Him as a ruler until we have suppressed the voice of our consciences. It is here, more than anywhere else, that we recognize the Personality of the Supreme Being. We feel His existence, because we feel the pressure of His law and have ominous forebodings of reward or punishment. Apart from the existence of a personal God, it is impossible to construct a consistent scheme of moral philosophy. We must stumble at the very threshold in explaining the great central fact of obligation. Turn it and twist it as you may, it always leads you to a superior will as the immediate ground of duty. Virtue never becomes law until it is enforced by authority. That will, to be sure, is determined by the nature of the person, and the ultimate ground of moral distinctions must be traced to the essential holiness of God. He cannot but will what is right, and it is precisely the relation of right to this perfect and holy will that creates the obligation of the creature. From God all moral distinctions proceed, and to God they naturally and necessarily lead. Their very essence

is destroyed the very moment you lay your hand upon His throne.

Here, then, the contrast between Pantheism and Theism is fundamental. It goes to the springs and measures of human action. Society, the State, the Family—every sphere into which the moral element enters—becomes, in the speculations of the Pantheist, a very different thing from what our natural sentiments lead us to apprehend, and from what is possible to be realized in experience. Man, in all his interests and relations, is a very different being according as you view him in one aspect or the other—a moral subject under the government of God, or the property and affection, the mere *modus*, of an all-pervading substance.

It is vain, therefore, to treat those speculations which strike at the personality of God as the harmless excursions of curiosity. True, the instincts of nature, in the ordinary tenor of life, are stronger upon the whole than these disastrous conclusions, but still they are not without their mischief in the humblest sphere, and on great occasions, when great interests are at stake, in periods of agitation and revolution, they may prompt to the most atrocious crimes. The Reign of Terror could never have been distinguished by its enormities if God and Retribution had not first been banished from the minds of its guilty agents. It is no light thing to make a mock at sin. He who trifles with the eternal distinctions of right and wrong not only foregoes the blessedness of the next world, but introduces disorder and confusion in this. He is an enemy to earth as well as to heaven. The belief of a superintending Providence is the guardian of Society, the security of the State, the safeguard of the Family. Its influence pervades every interest and sanctifies every office of man; it ennobles his actions, sweetens his affections, animates his hopes, gives courage in the hour of danger, serenity in time of trouble and victory in death. If there be a God it is a great thing to be a man; if there be none, and men should universally act on the belief that there were none, we had rather be anything

than a member of the human race. Hell and earth would differ only in topography.

3. But there is another aspect in which the two systems remain to be contrasted, and the immense importance of a personal God, such as nature and the Scriptures reveal, to be evinced.

Upon the hypothesis of Pantheism, religion becomes a contradiction in terms. What Howe long ago asserted of the scheme of Spinoza is equally applicable to every system which abolishes the "Thou" of our prayers—that "though he and his followers would cheat the world with names and with a specious show of piety, it is as directly levelled against all religion as any, the most avowed, Atheism; for, as to religion, it is all one whether we make nothing to be God, or everything; whether we allow of no God to be worshipped, or leave none to worship Him." But apart from this consideration, which of itself is conclusive—apart from the circumstance that religion necessarily implies moral government, and is founded on the relations of a moral and intelligent agent to a supreme Lawgiver—piety is subverted by having no object upon which to fasten its regards. It consists essentially in affections—in fear, reverence, veneration and love—which presuppose the existence of a person upon whom they can terminate. Its highest form is that of fellowship with God. It holds communion, a real, living intercourse, with the Father of our spirits. We speak to Him in the language of prayer, penitence, faith, thanksgiving and praise; He speaks to us by those sensible communications of His grace which make us feel at once that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. This free circulation of the affections and interchange of offices of love is the very essence of spiritual religion. But when you remove a personal God you destroy the only condition on which this state of things is possible. There is no Being to love, no Being to adore, no Being either to swear by or pray to, and all that remains of piety is a collection of blind impulses and cravings, which must create

their object, and which in their development, according to the law of suggestion, are singularly enough termed *a life*. The disciples of this school employ the language of genuine devotion, and seem to be intent upon a more full, vigorous and earnest piety than that which is fostered by symbols and creeds. Their hostility to the latter is pretended to be grounded upon an intense zeal for *the Spirit*. But when we come to look beneath these phrases, and inquire into the life which is so warmly commended, we find nothing but the yearnings of humanity—a pervading sense of emptiness and want—without reference to their moral character and tendencies, exalted into architects of God. It is the study of these wants, and the fabrication of a being, or a principle, or anything that seems suggested by them, that constitute the whole life of godliness. It is like leaving a hungry man, from the impulse of appetite, in the first place to conceive and then to create bread; or a thirsty man, from the mere craving of his thirst, to image and then produce water. A craving enables us to recognize the suitable object when presented, but never to frame either the conception of it or the reality beforehand. If a man had never seen or tasted or heard of food, he might have starved to death without knowing what he wanted. The feebleness and dependence of the creature may prompt it to admit the Self-sufficient and Almighty God when once He is revealed; but without being made known upon other grounds, the sense of dependence, however intense and penetrating, could never have carried us farther than a *something* on which we were dependent.

But in religion it is universally true that all our longings are the results and not the antecedents of knowledge. It is what the mind knows that inspires its aspirations and affections. Religious instincts are the offspring of reason and truth, and not the blind feeling of nature. When we know God and sin and ourselves, when we understand the law and our destiny, then comes a sense of guilt, a longing for pardon, a desire for holiness and peace. It is light let into

the soul, truth pointed by the Holy Spirit, that awakens every truly religious emotion. We feel because we believe; we do not believe because we feel. The eye affects the heart; it is not the heart that produces the eye.

Men in their unconverted state are compelled, from the dictates of conscience and the voice of reason, to recognize a personal God, but only in those relations in which the guilty stand to a judge—they believe and tremble. Hence their anxiety to suppress the conviction. They would gladly embrace some principle of beauty or feminine pity which would bless their persons without paying attention to their crimes. They would gladly fall back upon some impersonal spirit of nature, smiling in the stars or whispering in the breeze, about which they could indulge in soft and romantic sentiments without being put upon the troublesome duties of penitence, faith, humiliation and self-denial. They, therefore, can spare a personal God, because they have nothing to hope and much to dread from Him. But the truly Christian man is robbed of everything if you take away his Lord and Master. He has indeed lost a Friend, and such a Friend as no substitute can replace. When he is unable to cry, "Abba, Father," his spirit is burdened with intolerable anguish. The very life of his soul is extinguished.

The privilege of communion with God is the reward signalized in no system but that of the Gospel. The completeness of the notion is there developed, and the manner in which it may be realized in individual experience definitely described. It reconciles man to God and God to man, and institutes a fellowship which, though it may be occasionally disturbed, can never be broken off. The love which it enjoins and engenders is the union of the soul with the Author of its being; not the absurd imagination of the mystic—of being absorbed and swallowed up in God as a drop in the ocean. "There is nothing, therefore," says an able writer, "we should be more anxious to protect from every presumptuous attempt to disturb the holy boundary between God

and the creature, than just the opinion of the imperishable nature of love which binds both together. Instead of the self-hood of the personal creature being destroyed in the perfection of its love to God, it is much rather thereby elevated to its full truth and revealed in its eternal significance as the subject and object of a love between God and the creature. Then does man first of all come into the true possession of himself when he gives himself to God; whoever loses his life shall find it. What true love to God desires is, not at all abstract identity, not a resolution into the Divine Being, but perfect and undisturbed fellowship with God, just as is promised in the Scripture, as its highest end —not that it shall *become* God, but shall see God face to face." The result of any hypothesis which confounds them, it may be added, is the simple destruction of one or of both. In this aspect, therefore, Pantheism is most fatal in its results; it contradicts every principle of our religious nature, and, in leaving us without God, leaves us without hope in the world. It lays an interdict upon all the piety of the heart, and cheats us with the delusive sentiments of a vain fancy. It gives us poetry for God.

4. The personality of God has also a decisive influence upon the question in relation to the credibility of revelation in itself and in its miraculous credentials, which is now so keenly agitated among Neologists and the orthodox. The rigid continuity of nature is assumed, because nature is only a blind manifestation of properties and attributes which belong to a necessary substance. But the very moment you postulate intelligence and will, and ascribe the constitution of the universe to a free cause, its order is altogether contingent; and whether it shall ever be disturbed or not, depends entirely upon the plans and purposes of that Wisdom which presides over all. Temporary and occasional changes may contribute to the ultimate end to be achieved. Occasions may arise, from the operations of subordinate intelligences, which will render extraordinary interpositions the most effective instruments of good. Miracles certainly be-

come possible, since He who made nature can control it; and they become credible if circumstances should ever be such as to render them important.

As to revelation, it is antecedently credible upon the supposition that God is a person—that He should hold intercourse with His intelligent creatures. Persons naturally seek union; society is the sphere in which this mysterious reality becomes fully and completely developed. All finite persons would be miserable if there were none to converse with, and every principle of morality, truth, justice and benevolence supposes the existence of a social economy. So intimate is the connection between society and personality that, in our humble judgment, the infinite God could neither be holy nor blessed unless there was a foundation for society in the very essence of Deity. A God that was only a single person would want that union without which the person would be imperfect. Solitude may be enjoyed for a while, but it is imprisonment and death if made permanent. Hence, there is a deep philosophy in the doctrine of the Trinity. The Triune God is an all-sufficient God—all-sufficient to Himself and all-sufficient to His creatures. Before time began, or the stars were born, the Father rejoiced in the Son, and the Son rejoiced in the Father. There was the deepest union and the most ineffable communion, and it was only to reflect their blessedness and glory that other persons and other societies were formed, whose laws and principles must be traced to the very bosom of the Deity.

God being a person, therefore, it is antecedently likely that He would condescend to hold communion with His creatures; and hence all nations, whether barbarous or civilized, have assumed it as an indisputable truth that the Deity converses with man. Go where you will, there are altars, oracles and priests. This general consent in the credibility of revelation is the testimony of the race to an original feeling of the soul; a premonition on the part of God of what may be expected at His hands. The voice of nature is never a lie; and hence, given a personal God, we

may confidently conclude that He will not be without messages to those who are capable of intercourse with Him. He will delight in condescending to talk with His subjects. The instinct of personality for union will prompt it, benevolence will prompt it, goodness will prompt it, and wisdom will direct and regulate all. With humility and reverence be it spoken, there may be a something in the bosom of the infinite God, arising from His personal relations to us, analogous to those feelings of tenderness and solicitude which a parent cherishes, and which impel him to pour forth on his children his words of parting counsel.

PREFATORY NOTE.

The Rev. Dr. Samuel J. Baird published his able and elaborate work on Original Sin and topics connected therewith, under the title of "The First Adam and the Second. The Elohim Revealed in the Creation and Redemption of Man." Dr. Thornwell reviewed it in the Southern Presbyterian Review for April, 1860, from which we take the following pages. This vigorous production will close his discussion of those topics of Theology which relate to Moral Government in its essential principles and as modified by the Covenant of Works. In the next volume will commence his discussion of Moral Government as modified by the Covenant of Grace.

It is due to the author of "The Elohim Revealed" to state that he has publicly disclaimed holding, or designing to teach, the doctrine of philosophical Realism imputed to his work by Dr. Thornwell.

NATURE OF OUR INTEREST

IN THE

SIN OF ADAM.

BEING A REVIEW OF BAIRD'S ELOHIM REVEALED.

THIS book, as its title imports, covers the whole region of revealed Theology. It begins with the creation and ends with the consummation of all things. Exclusive of the Introduction, it consists of twenty-three chapters, and inclusive of the Index, of six hundred and eighty-eight octavo pages. A glance at the table of contents is sufficient to show that the author deals in "thoughts more elevate;" and that the high themes which he discusses, "providence, foreknowledge, will and fate," the primitive and fallen condition of mankind, the nature, consequences and extent of sin, and the nature, consequences and extent of redemption, are not discussed in a spirit of vain curiosity and false philosophy, but with the loyal design that he may "assert eternal providence, and justify the ways of God to men." All the topics which are successively brought before us—and they are those in which the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves are concentrated—are reviewed under the formal notion of a manifestation of the Divine perfections and glory. In the second chapter we have, indeed, as a key to the title of the work, an articulate exposition of the doctrine that the design of all God's works, whether of creation or providence, is to reveal Himself. The heavens and the earth are treated as

"an incomparable vesture," in which the Divine Majesty arrays itself in order to become visible to men; and this whole outward scene of things, the object of our sensations and perfections, is not regarded as a dark, gloomy, foreign power, but as an illustration of the Divine wisdom, a language in which God notifies to intelligence His own glory. The works are apprehended as so many words of God, and the sense with which they are all burdened is His own eternal power and Godhead. It is in man, however, that Dr. Baird finds the pre-eminent revealer of the triune Jehovah. He is the image of God. To him, therefore, special attention is given. His moral history is traced from the first moment of his being to the final consummation of the scheme of grace. The plan of Providence in relation to him is critically canvassed, and the result of the whole is that solid wisdom, that knowledge of God and of ourselves, which constitutes the perfection and unity of our moral and intellectual nature. The author lays out his chief strength upon the doctrine of original sin. This is the central topic of the book. To this everything else converges; the preliminary account of man's original condition is only an introduction to a just exposition of the effects of the fall, and the subsequent evolution of the economy of redemption is designed to cast its light back upon the nature and extent of the malady of which redemption is the remedy. The book, therefore, might very well have been entitled a Treatise of Original Sin. It opens with an historical sketch of the doctrine in question, briefly recapitulating the state and progress of opinion from Tertullian to Edwards. The first three chapters, on the Triune Creator, the Eternal Plan, and the Providential Administration, are designed to furnish the key to the subsequent discussion, to lay down the principle which pervades the entire Divine economy, and in the light of which all doctrinal truths are reduced to harmony and irradiated with new beauty. The author then enters directly upon the consideration of Man, and in the peculiarities of his being, as personal and generic, in his moral and spiritual

relations to God, and in the dispensations of Providence which have determined and conditioned them, he encounters those supreme questions concerning the law, sin and death; concerning redemption, holiness and life; concerning, in short, the two great covenants exhausting the Divine dealings with man, which constitute the sum and substance of Christian Theology. In the prosecution of these high themes he has exhibited abilities of no common order. He has endeavoured everywhere to find the one in the many, to trace facts to their principles, and to reconcile the testimonies of Scripture with the inductions of a sound philosophy. He has no charity for error. From the beginning of the book to the end he keeps up a running fire against Pelagians and Hopkinsians, whom he evidently regards as the pests of the Church, left, like the remnants of the nations among the Jews, to be pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides, as a punishment for unfaithfulness in the work of extermination. His eye never pities, nor his hand spares. Wherever he finds an enemy of God and His truth, he never declines the contest; and is quite content to leave the choice of weapons to his antagonist, being equally ready to assail heresy with the sword of the Spirit, and science, falsely so called, with the weapons of right reason. That he has done good service to the cause of sound doctrine cannot be denied. His chapters on Providence, the Eternal Plan, the Principle of the Law, the Nature of Sin, and on the various phases of Optimism, are singularly happy specimens of judicious speculation. The chapter on Providence, particularly, is entitled to great praise; and though we are not sure that he has done justice to McCosh, and are quite certain that, in relation to things generated and corruptible, he will find it difficult to excogitate a better theory of identity than that of Edwards properly restrained, yet the whole discussion touching the connection betwixt God and His works is sound and scriptural. It strikes us as a fault of the book that it betrays something of a captious spirit, a tendency to minute exceptions. Dr. Baird detects an error where others can see only

a fault of expression, and belabours opinions with great vehemence which the reader finds it impossible to discriminate from his own. Against Edwards, particularly, he has an inveterate spite. His doctrine of causation, his scheme of identity and his theory of the will, as well as special forms of theological opinion, are made the subjects of severe and biting criticism. In some of his strictures, Dr. Baird is unquestionably right; but in relation to the will we confess ourselves utterly at a loss to discover the difference in their fundamental principles between the doctrines of Edwards and himself. If Dr. Baird's theory is not one of rigid, absolute determinism, we are unable to understand him; and if it is, it is a matter of comparatively little moment whether the immediate determining cause be called a *motive* or an *impulse*, since in either case its efficacy is grounded in the nature. What the man is determines what he does as clearly according to Edwards as according to our author, and no man has given more prominence to innate habits and dispositions as controlling the will than Edwards.

But without dwelling longer on minor and incidental points, we hasten to the main subject of the book. The light which the author thinks that he has thrown upon the doctrine of original sin constitutes the distinguishing feature of the work, and gives it whatever claim it may have to special consideration as a theological contribution. He has a theory which, in his judgment, relieves the question of hereditary sin of most, if not of all, its difficulties. He can show how we are born guilty and depraved without any imputation upon the goodness or justice of God, or any perplexity in the notions of sin and holiness. The whole subject is perfectly clear to his mind, and the design of his book is to make it perfectly clear to the minds of others. Would that his success were commensurate with his aim! The chances are certainly against him. In a matter which penetrates into the lowest depths of human consciousness, which lays hold of the highest interests of the soul, which has agitated the most devout minds, and elicited the most earnest and

anxious thoughts of the profoundest thinkers for eighteen centuries—in which all, without exception, have failed, and the more profoundly they have thought the more intensely they have exclaimed, "Oh the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"—on such a subject the presumption is that no new light has dawned upon the world, either from Scripture or consciousness, to dispel the obscurity which enshrouds it. We have read Dr. Baird's book with no little care, and while acknowledging its merits in other respects, we are constrained to say that, in reference to its main design, its success is no exception to the general rule. He has solved one mystery by the substitution of another, or rather buried the mystery altogether in impenetrable darkness. His theory briefly resolves itself into the doctrine of a numerical identity of nature between Adam and his posterity, in consequence of which his sin is not constructively and legally, but strictly and properly, theirs. The thing which transgressed, and became guilty and corrupt in him, is the very identical thing which reappears in us, and of course brings its guilt and corruption with it. The only mystery in the case is that of the reappearance of the same thing in different forms of personal manifestation. This depends upon the law of generation. Dr. Baird, accordingly, lays out his whole strength upon that law, as being the keystone of the arch which supports his structure. He endeavours to show that it involves the communication, not of a similar or like, but of numerically the same, nature from the parent to the child. The father, substantially and essentially, though not personally, is reproduced in the offspring. This is the theory, as compendiously as we can express it, upon which the author has undertaken to solve the problem of the Fall.

Of course, in all this there is nothing new. It is as old as the introduction of Realism into the Christian Church. The author himself, in his preliminary historical sketch, has treated us to some rare specimens of this style of thinking,

and we have lying before us, from Anselm and the opponents of Roscelin and Abelard, illustrations equally rich of the same type of speculation. When we read Dr. Baird's lucubrations upon a nature, the law of generation and the relation subsisting between a nature and a person, we almost felt that we had been transported by some mysterious power of enchantment, across the track of centuries, to the cloisters of mediæval monks and to the halls of mediæval universities, and were listening again to the everlasting jangles about entities and quiddities, genera and species which John of Salisbury so graphically describes. Dr. Baird's sympathies are with the buried Realism of the past. He has proclaimed an open revolt against the whole spirit of modern speculation, and has endeavoured to remand philosophy to the frivolous discussions from which we had hoped that Bacon had for ever redeemed it. If the proof had not been before our eyes, we could not have believed that in the nineteenth century a man was to be found, out of "Laputa or the Empire," who could seriously undertake to solve theological problems by an appeal to the exploded heads of the Realists, or gravely attribute a real substantive existence to genera and species. The book is, in this respect, as an American production, a downright curiosity. It is a reaction against the entire current of modern thought, not only in theology, but in philosophy—as formal a protest against Nominalism, and the spirit of the inductive philosophy grounded in Nominalism, as against the received system of orthodoxy grounded in the same doctrine. It is, at least, five centuries too late, and five centuries ago it would not have been needed. Realism is dead and buried, and the progress of human knowledge, in every department of inquiry, since the thorough installation of the inductive method, is a sufficient proof that the death of Realism is the resurrection of truth. Dr. Baird has not given his allegiance to Realism in the form in which it was maintained by Plato, and in which it first entered into Christian speculation. He expressly denies the separate and independent

existence of universals, *universalia ante rem*. He embraces it as it was modified by Aristotle, *universalia in re*. His doctrine is, "that universals are, in a certain sense, realities in nature, but that the general conceptions are merely logical, the universals not having an existence of their own separate from the individuals through which they were manifested." The last clause of this sentence expresses precisely the Peripatetic doctrine as it was commonly understood. The first clause we are not certain that we fully comprehend. When Dr. Baird says that general conceptions are merely logical, does he mean that they do not represent the realities which, in some sense, exist in nature? If so, then no reliance is to be placed upon them. They have only a formal validity, and subjective consistency of thought becomes no guarantee for objective consistency of being. If the universals which we think are not the universals which exist in nature, it is obvious that we cannot pass from one to the other, or make them the subjects of common predicates. If the universals which we think are the universals which exist in nature, then how can it be said that our conceptions are merely logical? They evidently have an objective validity. This language, in the mouth of a Nominalist, we can perfectly comprehend, and we can also understand how a Peripatetic Realist can consistently maintain that our general conceptions are derived from individuals and dependent upon them—that they are logical in the sense that they are formed by the logical processes of analysis and comparison; but how he could represent them as *merely* logical—that is, as purely formal—we are unable to perceive. Dr. Baird restricts the existence of universals to a "certain sense." This qualifying clause means simply that they are never detached from individuals, that their existence is not separate and independent; but still he makes a real distinction between the particular and universal as pertaining to the same object. In every individual thing there are, according to him, two elements—the principle of individuation, or that which makes the thing to be this

and not that, or that and not this, and the principle of universality, which determines it to a certain genus. These are not different forms of contemplating the object, or different relations in which its properties and qualities are viewed; they are really different things—as distinct as the Persons of the Trinity, and as incapable of being divided. The universal realizes itself in the individual, but is not to be confounded with it. It pervades it without being a part of it.

1. In estimating the value of Dr. Baird's contributions, the first thing to be done is to settle precisely his notion of *nature*. What do we mean when we speak of the nature of a man, of the nature of a thing, and particularly of a moral nature? We confess that we have experienced no little difficulty in trying to compass the precise sense in which Dr. Baird uses the term. In the first place, he explicitly denies that it can be legitimately used to designate "our conception of the mere aggregate of characteristics belonging to a given substance."[1] Does this mean, that to signalize the properties of a substance, and to indicate the mode of their coexistence, is not to define its nature?—that its nature is something more than the sum and combination of its attributes? If so, he distinctly repudiates the sense in which it becomes applicable to a class-notion, and the only sense in which it can enter into the description of an object. Man's nature does not consist of those qualities and faculties which are manifested in consciousness. It is nothing personal, nothing individual, and nothing even generic, in the sense of an abstraction of what is similar in the consciousness of the race. It is not thought, will nor emotion, singly or combined in the unity of a personal subject. Neither, according to Dr. Baird, is the nature something relative and accidental. In this sense it is used by divines when the predicates *holy* and *sinful* are applied to it. The phrase "moral nature" commonly denotes the possession of the faculties which are necessary to moral agency, while a "sinful" or a "holy nature" designates the pervading

[1] Page 149.

attitude of the soul in relation to God and the Divine law. There are passages in which Dr. Baird seems to use the term in both these senses. "A moral nature," he says, "is one, the essential characteristics of which are reason, will, the moral sense or conscience."[1] Again, the *nature* is used as a synonym of the heart,[2] and must accordingly be taken as the complement of the affinities and tendencies which belong to the soul. It is that which lies at the root of the will, and conditions and determines all its operations. But, with these occasional exceptions, the whole current of his argument requires the sense of prevailing habitude or disposition to be discounted as impertinent. In this sense the idea of a numerical identity of nature in different persons becomes simply absurd. If *nature* expresses the tendencies or attitudes of the soul, the mode of its existence, or the law under which it exists and acts, it must obviously be numerically different, though it may be logically the same, in the case of every human being. A mode cannot be conceived apart from that of which it is a mode. To be and to be in some definite condition are the same thing. Natural or abstract being is impossible. Each soul must, therefore, have its own nature. It may be holy, it may be sinful—it must be one or the other, and its holiness or sinfulness is its own. These terms define the moral character of the particular being. Other souls may also be sinful or holy, and their holiness or sinfulness is also their own. The crookedness of one tree is not the crookedness of another. The posture of the soul is as strictly individual as the posture of the body. We might as well say that the hump-back of two men is numerically the same deformity, as to confound the moral obliquity of one man with the moral obliquity of another. The identity of these relations is simply the similarity of nature by which they are comprehended under a common term. Hence, according to that conception of *nature* which makes it the moral attitude of the soul, the depravity of A is no more the depravity of B than the personal qualities of A are the per-

[1] Page 236. [2] Page 160.

sonal qualities of B. A numerical identity of nature and a personal diversity of existence are flat contradictions. Discounting both these senses of *nature*, what other sense remains? Dr. Baird undertakes to enlighten us. In the first place, his *nature* "is not expressive of a mere abstraction, but designates an actual thing, an objective reality."[1] This actual thing, or objective reality, is the "sum of the permanent forces which were at the beginning incorporated in the constitution of Adam and the creatures, and which, by their severalty, determine and define the several species of the living things."[2] Here the Realism strongly crops out. Adam's constitution, in so far as he was an individual, is one thing: there is incorporated in it a set of forces which makes the henad *humanity*, and in that set of forces his nature must be sought. Substances, we are told, "were at the beginning endowed with forces which are distinctive and abiding, and which in organic nature flow distributively in continuous order to the successive generations of the creatures."[3] It is clear, from these passages, that Dr. Baird understands by *nature* a real entity, active, efficient and powerful, which enters into and conditions the individual, but is not strictly a part of it—a something in which the individual lives and moves, and which is entirely distinct from its own properties or states. Accordingly, he explains our oneness with Adam upon the baldest principles of Realism. "Our oneness," he says, "does not express the fact merely that we and Adam are alike, but that we are thus alike because the forces which are in us and make us what we are were in him, and are numerically the same which in him constituted his nature and gave him his likeness. The body which is impelled by two diverse forces, x and y, moves in the direction of neither of them, but in that of a different force, z, the resultant of the two. Yet is neither of the forces lost, but merely modified, each by contact with the other. The new force, z, is simply x modified by y. So, in the successive generations of the human race, so far as their traits are the

[1] Page 150. [2] Ibid. [3] Page 148.

result of propagation, so far as they are the offspring of their parents, theirs are but the same identical forces which were in their parents, only appearing under new forms."[1]

But the crowning proof that Dr. Baird means something more than mere habits and dispositions, or an all-controlling generic habit, or disposition, or tendency, or law (for all these terms have been employed to express the same idea), is that he makes the nature the proper and exclusive ground of moral obligation. The person is only a contrivance to reach the nature. The seat of obligation is not the *man*, but his *nature*. "From all this it inevitably follows," says he, "that all the responsibilities and obligations which can in any conceivable way attach to a person must have their ground in the nature and attach themselves essentially to it. Since, in general, every kind of obligation implies the exercise of some kind of efficiency, and since the moral nature is the only principle of moral efficiency in a person, it follows that all moral obligations must lay hold of the nature, else they are altogether nugatory and void."[2] If by *nature* were here meant the properties of the personal soul, as endued with faculties adapted to moral distinctions, the meaning would be proper enough. But that sense the author has explicitly repudiated. Nature is nothing that constitutes *a* man—it is only what makes *the* man. To say that he here means moral habits and dispositions would be to make him write the most preposterous nonsense. The nature in that sense is not the subject, but the end of the obligation of the law. It is the very thing which the law requires. To have a holy heart, to love God supremely, to love our neighbours as ourselves,—these are the very things which constitute the matter of the command. The very essence of obedience is the possession of a right nature. How absurd, therefore, to say that they are the things bound or to which the command is addressed! Dr. Baird evidently means—or he means nothing—that behind the personal soul, with its essential cognitive and moral faculties, there exists a mysterious entity

[1] Page 150. [2] Page 249.

of whose efficiency this soul, with its properties and attributes, is only the instrument. To that entity the law is addressed; that entity God holds responsible in the person; that entity is the substance of the man. The rest is mere contingency and accident. His meaning is put beyond all doubt by the comparison which he institutes between humanity and the Godhead. "A person," he tells us, "is a several subsistence which is endowed with a moral nature. The word *person* is expressive of the severalty, while the phrase *moral agent* indicates the efficiency of such a subsistence. In the blessed Trinity each several subsistence is a Person of whom the three subsist in common in one undivided nature and essence. Among the angelic hosts each one is a several person, having a distinct and several nature. Among men a nearer likeness to God is seen in a plurality of persons, possessing a several and distributive property in one common nature. The relationship which subsists between men by virtue of their community of nature is a shadow of the Divine unity, which falls infinitely short of the intimacy and identity which are realized in the blessed Persons of the Godhead."[1] Now, when it is remembered that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are *the same in substance*, that this is precisely the ground of their being one God and equal in power and glory, it is obvious that Dr. Baird must mean that the ground of identity with the individuals of the human species is their possession of a *common substance*. Their community of natures thus resolves itself into community of substance. And as the substance of the Godhead is that Divine spirit which can be equally predicated of the three Persons, so the substance of humanity must be that spiritual essence by virtue of which each man becomes a living soul. Adam's soul was the same substance with the souls of all his posterity. The forms of consciousness which this substance has assumed are as manifold and various as the human creatures in which it has been found, but the substance itself remains ever the same. The whole substance of the race was created in Adam

[1] Page 237.

—no new human substance has been created since. Man is essentially one spirit. As a dozen chairs made from the same oak are one matter, so a dozen souls sprung from Adam are the same spirit.

We have thus endeavoured to elicit Dr. Baird's notion of human nature. We have seen that it is not found in any of those properties and affections which constitute the personal consciousness; it is not the habitude or tendency of these properties and attributes to any given mode of manifestation; it is nothing relative or accidental. It is the ultimate ground of personality, the material condition of intelligence, responsibility and will. It is an efficient power or a complement of forces which absolutely conditions and determines all the activities and all the states of the individual. It is the bond of unity to the whole race. It sustains the same relation to human persons that the substance of the Godhead sustains to the ineffable Three. It is clearly, therefore, the substance of the soul, considered as the substratum or basis of all personal consciousness—as that which contains the forces, the entire sum of the forces, that characterize the human species. Adam and his posterity are one substance; the same spiritual essence which underlay his consciousness underlies theirs; they are partakers, not of a like, but of a common nature. This is the doctrine as far as we have been able to apprehend it. Hence *the soul* and *nature* are frequently used as interchangeable terms. For example: "The will is the soul disposed to the active embrace of the affinities which it realizes. It is the nature viewed in the light of its tendency to give expressions to the aptitudes which it intuitively feels."[1] Again: "Edwards has much on this point; but entirely fails to bring out the fundamental fact, that at last it is the soul itself which endows the motive with the character in which it appears. The *nature* of the transgressor is the cause of his sins."[2] Throughout the whole discussion upon the subject of the will, *the soul, the nature of the soul,* and *the moral nature,* are used as equivalent

[1] Page 160. [2] Ibid.

terms. One other passage will close this part of the subject. Considered as being appointed to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever, the elements, Dr. Baird tells us, which are of most significance in the constitution of men are "their moral natures and personality. The word *nature* we have formerly defined to be the designation of a permanent force dwelling in a substance. A moral nature is one the essential characteristics of which are reason, will and the moral sense or conscience." These faculties, it will be noticed, do not constitute, but characterize, a moral nature. They themselves are not the permanent, abiding force which is called moral, but only the marks or signs of it. This force, therefore, can be nothing less than the substance of the soul manifesting its moral peculiarities through these faculties of the personal consciousness as its organs. The author subsequently adds, "the proper subject of a moral nature is a spiritual substance. In no other mode have we any reason to imagine it possible for it to exist at all."[1] The substance of the soul, as endowed with the forces which realize themselves in the faculties and energies of the personal consciousness, of which these operations are the signs and characteristics—that substance, as a causal force, which underlies them all, and conditions and determines them all—that substance is the nature. Or if there be any distinction between them, the substance is the ground and the nature the causal energies which are contained in it. That is, the soul considered as simple being may be called substance; considered as a cause or as endowed with power, it is nature; the word *nature* expressing directly the forces, and *substance* that in which they inhere. But for all the purposes of speculation the difference is purely formal. A substance to human thought is only the correlative of the properties which manifest it.

2. The next point to which we invite the attention of the reader, as further developing the philosophy of Dr. Baird, and furnishing cumulative proof of the truth of what we

[1] Pages 226, 227.

have said, is the relation subsisting between person and nature. It is briefly that of a cause to its effect. The person is a product of the nature. "It is certain,"[1] says he, "that nothing may be predicated of the person which does not grow out of the nature. And if this must be admitted, there appears to be no ground on which it can be claimed that the nature, because existing in another person, is entitled to exemption from its essential guilt. The opposite view assumes the absurdity that there may be and is that, in the person, which has a subsistency and moral agency of its own—a competence to responsibility and capacity to appreciate and experience the power of the law's sanctions distinct from and independent of the nature. Is it said to be unjust to hold my person bound for an act which was committed in the person of another? The objection would be valid were the person a force to control or modify the nature. But since the contrary is the case, it does not appear reasonable that exemption should be claimed on that ground. In fact, the nature, which was the cause of my person, was there. And as every power or principle of efficiency which is in the effect must have been in its cause, it follows inevitably that everything in me, upon which resistance to the apostasy might be imagined, was actually there, and, so far from opposing, took part in the treason. We sinned in Adam, and fell with him in his first transgression. The accident of my personal existence, had it then been realized, would have added no new influences to those which were actually engaged, and would not have modified the result nor changed the responsibility attaching to it. The objection here considered strikes at the root of all responsibility, as well for personal as for native sin. If I am not justly responsible for Adam's transgression, because only my nature was efficient in it, then may I, with equal propriety, claim exemption in respect to personal sins, since in them my person is the mere subject of the action, and my nature is the sole efficient cause."

[1] Page 257.

The nature not only generates the person, but the person is merely an organization or instrument through which the properties of the nature can be unfolded in action. Without the person, the nature is a power without tools. Its appetencies can find no means of gratification. If it could be conceived as existing at all—which it cannot be—its forces would have to assume the form of a vain *conatus*. They would be simply strivings after being or manifestation. But the person furnishes them with all that is necessary for a full and distinct realization of their energies. Of course the person in itself is quite subordinate; and all the rhetoric about its intrinsic dignity and its superiority to things, its essential rights and its ethical importance, is but attributing to the casket the properties which belong to the jewel enshrined in it. Dr. Baird distinctly affirms that the person is but an accident of the nature—inseparable to be sure, but only an accident—and that its whole moral significance is to be resolved into the nature. It is no great thing, therefore, to be able to say "I." It is not the personal subject, it is the impersonal forces which move it, that constitute the real dignity of man. All the faculties which distinguish the being that I call "Myself"—memory, intelligence, conscience and will—are but the organs through which a being that is not myself plays off its fantastic tricks. I am a puppet, called into being by this mysterious power, only that it may have something to sport with and develop its resistless forces. Never was a poor demoniac more completely at the bidding of the possessing fiend than the personal subject at the beck of this impersonal nature. Other philosophers have foolishly imagined that they were going to the very core of man's nature, essentially considered, when they described it as *personal*. They have signalized this peculiarity as that which contains in it the ground of every other distinction from the rest of this sublunary world; other beings are *things*, man is a person. It is his nature to be a person. But Dr. Baird sharply distinguishes, though he does not divide, nature and personality. The person is to the nature

what the eye is to vision or the muscles to motion. The following passage is an explicit statement of his doctrine:

"Whilst thus all moral obligations arise out of the constitution of the nature, and lay hold essentially upon it, the subject against which they are enforced is the person in which the nature subsists; and this for evident reasons. It is only in the form of a person that a moral nature can subsist. All that is proper to the person, or in any way characteristic of it as such, grows out of the nature, and is designed and constructed as a means for the activity of the nature; so that the person is but the nature embodied in a form adapted to its efficient action. It is the organization through which the nature may meet its responsibilities by performing the duties demanded of it. Since, therefore, the nature can neither exist nor therefore be responsible, neither recognize nor satisfy its responsibilities, but as it is embodied in a person; and since to it as thus embodied the obligations which rest upon it are, for this reason, by God addressed, it follows that persons are the immediate and only subjects of moral law and responsibility. The nature comprehends all the forces which are proper to the person in which it subsists. Among these are not only included those of which obligation or obedience may be supposed, but those susceptibilities upon which may be predicated the realization of suffering, the endurance of punishment. There is, therefore, nothing in the person of which exemption can be imagined as apart from the nature. Were it possible to take away the nature and yet the person remain—were it possible to suppose any other forces proper to the person than all its proper forces—then would there be room for the conception that the person might be irresponsible for the nature, and have a responsibility distinct from it. But so long as it is true that the moral nature is that which makes the person what it is in all moral respects, and that the only existence of the nature is in the person, it will follow that the attempt to separate the obligations of the nature and of the person is absurd and preposterous. The person is bound under the responsibili-

ties which attach to the nature as subsisting therein, and can be held to no others than such as arise therein. The form of the obligation is indeed modified by the accidents of the person; but such accidental forms are always capable of resolution into general principles which attach essentially to the nature."[1]

3. Let us next attend to the law of generation. In Adam the nature and the person were concreated. He was, in the first moment of his existence, both an individual and the species, a man and humanity. In him the nature of the entire race was created once for all, and from him is propagated by generation, and so descends to all his seed.[2] But what does the doctrine of propagation involve? "It implies that all the powers and forces which are, or to the end of time shall be, in the living creatures, vegetable and animal, by which the earth is filled and peopled, have their origin in those creatures which were made at the beginning of the world, and were implanted in them thus to be developed and perpetuated in their seed to the end of time. It is not that the powers which are developed in the offspring have a likeness merely to those of the parent. This would be to attribute the whole matter to a continual exercise of creative energy. But the forces of the offspring are derived by propagation from the parents. Those very forces, numerically, were in the parents, and so back to the original progenitors. And yet it is as undeniable as it is inscrutable that the entire sum of forces which operate in the living creation, vegetable and animal, were created and implanted in the primeval creatures at the beginning."[3] Dr. Baird further teaches that the first man is the efficient cause of the existence of all other men. God made Adam, and Adam made the rest of the race. The whole man, in his entire existence as spirit and body, is the effect of which generation is the cause. "We take the position," says Dr. Baird, "that the entire man proceeds by generation from the parents. We do not say, we do not mean, that the soul is generated by the soul,

[1] Page 250. [2] Page 256. [3] Pages 144, 145.

or the body by the body. But man, in his soul, body and spirit, is an unit composed of diverse elements, yet having but one personality, in which the soul is the element of universal efficiency. Of that personality, efficient thus, it is that we predicate generation, and, according to the maxim that like begets like, we hold the child, in its entire nature, to be the offspring of the parent. The entire race of man was in our first parents, not individually and personally, but natively and seminally, as the plant is in the seed. When Adam was created, among the powers which constituted his nature was that of generation. His substance was made to be an efficient cause, of which posterity, taken in their whole being, physical and spiritual, are the normal and necessary effect. Thus, in Adam and Eve the human race had not a potential existence merely; but God, in creating the first pair, put into efficient operation the sufficient and entire cause of the existence of their seed."[1]

Generation, according to this account, performs two wonders. It first propagates the nature, and next, as the indispensable condition of the existence of the nature, it creates the person in whom the nature is to appear. The person is as truly the effect of the causal energy of the parent as the communication of the nature. Here there occurs to us a difficulty which we crave to have solved. The nature of Adam and his posterity, we are told, is one, because it descends to us by generation. The essence of generation is to reproduce the same. If now the law of generation establishes an identity of nature between the parent and the child, why not also an identity of person? If the person is as truly its product as the nature, how comes it that the generated person should be different, while the generated nature is the same? If to generate is to propagate, why not the person be a propagation as well as the nature? Then, again, what is it that generates? Dr. Baird answers, The nature *through* the person. What is generated? The nature *in* a person. What now restricts the identity to one part of the

[1] Pages 340, 341.

product, while that which answers to both parts is active in the production? To us the dilemma seems inevitable that either every human being descended from Adam is the same person with him, or that the law of generation concludes nothing as to the identity of nature. If a person can beget a numerically different person, we do not see why he cannot beget a numerically different nature. Besides this we have a vague suspicion that a cause and its effect are not commonly construed as the same thing. They are certainly different in thought, whatever they may be in existence. If the cause does nothing more than continue itself, if what is called the effect is only a change in the mode of existence of the cause —a phenomenal variety of being—we crave to understand how the universe can be really different from its Author? Dr. Baird says that Adam is the cause, the efficient cause, of the existence of his posterity. If now his causal energy terminates in the reproduction of himself, and they must be one with him *because* he is their *cause*, the bearing of the principle upon the theistic argument is too palpable to be mistaken. We shall land in but one substance in the universe, the ὄντως ὄν of the Platonists, and all else will be shadow and appearance.

The reader must have been struck already with the close correspondence between the reasonings of Dr. Baird in relation to the nature of man, and the reasonings of the Pantheists in relation to God. They postulate a great, impersonal, all-pervading ground of universal being, as he postulates a great, impersonal, all-pervading ground of human manifestation. The primal substance of the Pantheist is the life of all that lives, and yet has no life of its own; at the root of every consciousness, and yet without consciousness itself; the radical principle of all knowledge, and yet unable to utter the formula, "Behold I know." So Dr. Baird's nature has no separate being of its own, and yet gives being to the man; is without intelligence or self-hood, and yet the basis of them both. The real being of the Pantheist conditions all, while itself is unconditioned; determines all differ-

ences, while itself without differences; is the secret of all relations, and yet absolved in itself from every relation. Equally absolute in reference to man is Dr. Baird's nature. And, as with the Pantheist, all that we call creatures are but phenomena of the primordial substance—forms in which it realizes itself;—so with Dr. Baird all human persons are but phenomena of his original nature—the vestments with which it clothes itself in order to become visible, or the instruments it seizes in order to act. The phenomenal manifestations of the Pantheist obey the law of development; those of Dr. Baird, the law of generation. Each is a philosophy of one in the many. They both, too, arise from the same process of thought. The highest genus must necessarily absorb all differences and potentially contain them, while none can be predicated of it. The descent develops these differences in increasing fullness until we come to individuals, which logically are of no value. The void absolute is the logical result of a Realism which attributes real existence to genera and species. Beginning at the bottom of the line, we remove difference after difference until we reach undifferenced being—the τὸ ὄν. If the genus is real, it develops from itself, as you come down the line, all the varieties of subordinate classes in which it is found. The nothing in this way is made to yield everything. The highest genus, though itself nothing, yet, as a genus, contains essentially all properties and all attributes. We have before us a curious illustration of the tendencies of Realism to end in nihilism in an elaborate argument of Fredigesius, which concludes with the famous axiom of Hegel, God equal nothing. The logic is unassailable; the absurdity lies in attributing existence to general names. Once give up the maxim of Nominalists, that all real beings are singular, and the law of classification expresses not only a process of thought but the order of being, and you cannot stop until you reach an *ens realissimum* which, at one and the same time, includes the whole fullness of existence, and is totally void of predicates—at once a plenum and a vacuum. The

argument is short, simple and unanswerable. If a species is a real substance, numerically the same in all the individuals, the genus must be a substance numerically the same in all its species; and thus, in ascending from genus to genus, we extend the numerical identity of substance until we arrive at absolute being, which is numerically the same in all things, and which, being without attributes, must be both everything and nothing. We are quite confident that all the absurd speculations concerning the absolute which have aimed to take away from us a personal God, and to resolve all existence into an unconditioned unity of substance, are but offshoots of the spirit of Realism. The body has been buried, but the ghost still hovers about the haunts of speculation.

While on this subject of generation, there are other difficulties which we would like to have solved. Its law is that it propagates the *same* nature—not a like, but numerically the same, nature. Does this nature exist whole and entire in each individual? If so, how can it be found in millions and millions of persons, and yet be only one? How can each man have all of it, and yet all have it at the same time? Upon this point we are like Snug the joiner, rather dull of comprehension. Or is the nature divided? Then each man has only a distributive share, and if in proportion to the number of heirs the inheritance is diminished the last man that is to be has the prospect of a very slender interest. If, too, original sin grows less with the diminution in the quantum of nature, the race stands a chance of being considerably improved by the very law which has ruined it. How will Dr. Baird solve this problem of the one and the many? He has fairly raised the question, and he ought to have answered it. He has scouted the old doctrine that generation produces sons like their fathers; he ought to have shown us how they and their fathers can both have identically the same nature at the same time, without making that nature manifold or without dividing it. We wish to see him fairly encounter the question which baffled the genius of Plato, and

which Socrates pronounced to be a wonder in nature. It is a question which every phase of Realism gives rise to, and when a man in the nineteenth century revolts to that philosophy, he ought to have something to say upon this cardinal matter.

As to the doctrine, for which Dr. Baird contends, of the Traduction of souls, we regard it, in a theological point of view, as of very little importance. Holding, as we do, that the child is numerically a different being from the parent—different in substance, different in person, different in nature, different in everything in which he is distinct, though in all essential respects precisely like the parent—we do not see that the doctrine of original sin is relieved of a single difficulty by any theory as to the mode of the production of the man. No matter how called into being, he is a separate, indivisible moral agent, and he is either mediately or immediately the creature of God. Generation is but the process through which God creates him, and whatever causes, independently of himself, condition his being are ultimately to be referred to God. If it were wrong to create him under guilt, it is wrong to permit him to be generated under guilt. The only effect which the doctrine of Traduction has is to widen the interval between the direct agency of God and the commencement of the soul; but make the chain of second causes as long as you please, you reach God at last, and these determining intermediate influences do not shift from Him the responsibility under which that soul begins to be. They are independent of it, and its state is as truly to be referred to His will as if He created it at once by the breath of His mouth. Let it be granted that the soul begins its being in a certain state, and the conclusion is inevitable, either that the state in question cannot be sinful, cannot be charged upon the soul as guilt, or you must seek some other ground for the imputation than the mode of that soul's production. The great difficulty is how it comes to be guilty in God's sight before it had a being, and it is no solution of this difficulty to tell us how it received its being. It is not,

and cannot be responsible for its state, unless that state is grounded in guilt which can be justly charged upon it. If it passes through a dirty channel and becomes filthy its filth is misfortune and not sin unless it passes through that channel in consequence of a sin which can be regarded as its own. Hence, we have never felt any zeal upon the question of Traduction as a theological problem. If the child is a new being, it is a matter of no moment whether it is created at first or second hand. The guilt or innocence of its state must turn upon quite other grounds than those which determine how it came to be at all. Dr. Baird's hypothesis would solve the difficulty completely if it were not wanting in one capital condition—the possibility of being true. It implies a palpable contradiction in terms. It makes a million to be one, and one to be a million. It relieves perplexity by absurdity.

We cannot dismiss this subject without entering a caveat against the repeated representations of Dr. Baird, that the parent is the cause of the child. Stapfer is even still more extravagant in the manner in which he has reasoned upon the causal relation. And they both mean not material or instrumental causes, but causes strictly and properly efficient. But can such language be vindicated? Consider the parent in the only light in which he has any ethical value, that of a personal, voluntary agent, and is he the maker of the child? Does he produce by a conscious exercise of power, and with a predetermined reference to the nature of the effect to be achieved? Does he act from design, or is he a blind, mechanical instrument? Can he fix the size, shape, bodily constitution or personal features of his offspring? Can he determine the bias or extent of its intellectual capacities? Has his will—and that Dr. Baird tells us is the exponent of the nature—anything to do with the shaping and moulding of the peculiarities which attach to the fœtus? Can he even determine that there shall be any fœtus at all? It is perfectly clear that he is in no other sense a cause than as an act of his constitutes the occasion upon which processes

connected with the vital and material constitution of the sexes, and entirely independent of his will, are instituted, which, under the providence of God, terminate in an offspring which the Almighty has moulded and fashioned according to His will. He simply touches a spring which sets powers at work that he can neither control nor modify. He is only a link in a chain of instruments through which God calls into being, and the organic law through which all the changes take place that form and develop the child is but the expression, in the last analysis, of the efficiency of God. We cannot say, therefore, that the parent is the efficient cause of his offspring. The relation between them is not that of cause and effect, if by cause be meant anything more than an instrument or means. Our parents have no more made us than we have made ourselves. We are God's creatures, and owe our being to His sovereign will.

The reader has now before him the grounds on which Dr. Baird explains our interest in the sin of Adam. It was strictly and properly ours—as really so as if it had been committed in our own persons. Each man can say, to use language which he has quoted with approbation, "there sinned in him not I, but this which is I. My substance sinned, but not my person; and since the substance does not exist otherwise than in a person, the sin of my substance attaches to my person, although not a personal sin. For a personal sin is such as, not that which I am, but I who am, commit —in which Odo and not humanity sins—in which I, a person, and not a nature, sins. But inasmuch as there is no person without a nature, the sin of a person is also the sin of a nature, although it is not a sin of nature." In a single phrase, Adam was every man, and therefore every man sinned in Adam. The very identical thing which makes any one a man is the thing which apostatized in his great transgression, and therefore there is no marvel that it should be held guilty wherever it is found. The rogue is a rogue, no matter under what disguise he appears. The same is the same, and must always continue so; and original sin is there-

fore as necessary and inevitable as the law of identity. The imputation of guilt is disembarrassed of all difficulty, for it is nothing more than a finding of the real facts in the case. It finds the race to be Adam, and it simply says so. There is no fiction of law, no constructive unity of persons, no mere relations, whether moral or political. There is simply the naked fact that every human being did actually apostatize in the person of Adam in the whole essence of his humanity.

There are some other conclusions which seem to us to follow with as rigid necessity from Dr. Baird's premises as the denial of constructive guilt: (1.) In the first place, they make every man responsible for every sin of Adam. In every sin his nature was implicated—it was his nature that made him capable of sin or holiness—and his nature is expressed in every determination of his will. Now if that nature passes to his posterity precisely as it was in him, it must pass burdened with all the guilt of all the transgressions of his life. We are, therefore, answerable not for the one offence alone, which seems to have been the idea of Paul, but for all his iniquity. His personal sins cannot be detached from the nature. The person is only the tool of the nature; and therefore, as growing out of the nature, and conditioned upon the existence of the nature, all his personal shortcomings are really and truly ours. Dr. Baird has recoiled from this conclusion, but the distinction with which he has sought to evade it will not sustain him. "There are two classes of actions which, in this objection, are confounded, but which should be carefully distinguished. Of these one consists in such personal actions as result from the fact that the nature is of a given and determinate character. These, in no respect, change the nature or indicate any change occurring in it, but constitute the mere criteria by which the character and strength of its attributes may be known. After their occurrence the nature flows on unchanged to posterity, conveying to them, not the transient accidents which have thus arisen from it, but itself, as essentially it is. To this class belong all those sins of our intermediate ances-

tors, which are here objected to us. These in nowise modify the nature, nor are they fruits of any change taking place in it as inherited by them, but are the evidences and fruits of its being what it is in the person by whom they are wrought, and to whom therefore they attach. The other class consists of such agency as springing from within constitutes an action of the nature itself, by which its attitude is changed. The single case referable to this class is that of apostasy—the voluntary self-depravation of a nature created holy. Here, as the nature flows downward in the line of generation, it communicates to the successive members of the race not only itself thus transformed, but, with itself, the moral responsibility which attaches inseparably to it, as active in the transformation wrought by it and thus conveyed."[1]

Here, in the first place, it is explicitly stated that the only sin in which the nature is active is that which changes its general attitude—perverts it from holiness and God. After it has become perverted it remains dormant, and the person comes forward as a mere exponent of this perverted state. Does Dr. Baird mean to say that the nature is not implicated in *every* sin? If so, he eats his own words, for he has again and again affirmed that the relation of an action to the nature is the sole ground of its moral significance. Besides, how can these actions manifest the nature if they do not spring from it? If the nature is not their cause, how can we determine anything in regard to its attitude from them as effects? Moreover, if the nature always conditions the moral determinations of will, these sins are either not voluntary or the nature has ultimately produced them. In the next place, the ground of distinction between those moral actions which indicate a perverted nature, but in which it is not itself active, and those in which it is active, is most extraordinary. A man wants to know when his nature is active and when not; or what actions modify it and what do not; and what is the answer of Dr. Baird? Simply this, that those actions alone directly implicate the nature which

[1] Pages 508, 509.

change its attitude. The criterion is not in the actions themselves, but in the effect. That is to say, Dr. Baird was anxious to limit the responsibility of Adam's posterity for his guilt to the single sin of his apostasy, and therefore extemporizes a distinction to suit the occasion. He does not show us how it appears that the nature was more active in this sin than in any other—that it was any more self-caused, or that it any more sprang from within. It had graver consequences—that will be freely admitted—but the consequences of an action do not determine its origin. In the third place, we do not understand what Dr. Baird means when he says that the sins of a fallen being do not modify his nature. If his idea is that they do not change its general attitude, that is clear. But surely they increase the amount of guilt and depravity. The blindness of the sinner may daily become intenser and his heart harder. Are there no modifications of the nature? A man can fall but once, but surely he may continue to sink lower. He but once turns his back upon God, but surely he can proceed farther in the direction to which he has turned. The body dies but once, but after death it can putrefy. Is putrefaction no modification of its state? Dr. Baird's doctrine, if this is his meaning, is simply absurd. Every sin modifies the nature; it strengthens the general habit of depravity, and increases the tendency to repeat itself. There are endless degrees of wickedness and guilt, from the first act of apostasy to the desperate and malignant condition of damned spirits. Guilt accumulates and corruption festers. Hence, every sin which he committed modified Adam's nature. He first turned his face from God, and every succeeding one was a step farther from the Holy One. Until renewed, his heart grew harder and his mind darker with every transgression; his guilt increased in the same proportion; and if his nature were numerically the same with ours, his nature must have come to us not only as it was perverted by the first sin, but as it was modified by every subsequent offence. This conclusion is inevitable until Dr. Baird can specify what relation his na-

ture had to the first sin, which it did not have to any other sin. The distinction must not be grounded in the effect, but in the nature of the relation itself.

(2.) Another consequence which follows from Dr. Baird's doctrine—in fact from every doctrine which resolves the propagation of sin exclusively into the parental relation—but more stringently from Dr. Baird's notion of numerical identity, is that Adam, penitent and believing, must have begotten penitent and believing children. Conversion was another change in the attitude of his nature. It, at least, was no transient accident, but revolutionized the nature itself. Under the influence of Divine grace the renewed nature turned again to God and embraced Him as the portion of the soul. Now, if the nature flows from parent to child as it is in the parent—and this must be the case if it is numerically the same—then a converted parent must beget converted children. Dr. Baird will certainly admit that if Adam had maintained his integrity his descendants would have been holy—he would have propagated the nature as it was in him. Having fallen, he propagates the nature as it is now perverted—that is, he still propagates it as it exists in him. If, now, he can propagate as a holy being and propagate as a fallen being, why not as a renewed being? What is there, we ask, in the new attitude superinduced by Divine grace that prevents it from being imparted likewise? Or if there be anything, how can that be numerically the same which is radically different in all its aspirations and affections? Can a crooked tree be numerically the same with a straight one? Can a holy nature and a sinful nature be one? To state the matter in a very few words: the parent reproduces his nature in the child; his nature is a renewed one, therefore the child must be renewed. This is the difficulty which never yet has been solved by those who are reluctant to recognize any other relation betwixt Adam and his seed than that of the parent and child; and we suspect never will be.

4. Having considered the essential principles of Dr.

Baird's theory of original sin, we proceed to point out the modifications which, if generally adopted, they would inevitably work in our current theology. And first, in relation to imputation and guilt. Dr. Baird, as we understand him, does not object to the common definition that guilt is the obligation to punishment arising from the ill desert of sin; neither would he cancel the distinction between the moral necessity of punishment or that which springs from the inherent righteousness of the case, and the legal or judicial necessity which springs from the sentence of the law. To deserve condemnation and to be condemned are not formally the same thing. Intrinsic ill desert divines are accustomed to denominate *potential* guilt or guilt in the first act—it is *dignitas pœnæ*. The judicial sentence of condemnation they call *actual* guilt, guilt in the second act—*obligatio ad pœnam*. Dr. Baird, however—and in this we agree with him—restricts the term *guilt* to the ill desert itself, and makes the judicial sentence only the consequence of that. Hence, in strict propriety of speech, guilt is the ground and not the essence of condemnation—the moral and not the legal necessity of punishment. He is guilty who deserves to be condemned, whether he actually is so or not. So far there is no difference of opinion. We also agree with Dr. Baird that the imputation of guilt is simply the declaration of the fact. To condemn a man is to find or pronounce him guilty, and not to make him so. It is a verdict upon the case as it is, and introduces no new element. But the question arises, Upon what grounds is a man pronounced deserving of punishment? And here we are compelled to shake hands and part from our brother. He explicitly maintains that the *only* ground upon which the ill desert of an action can attach to a man is his own personal causal relation to it as its author. This we utterly deny. But we do not maintain, as Dr. Baird seems to insinuate, that a man can be pronounced guilty when the sin is not really his. All that we maintain is that a sin may be ours, really and truly ours, and therefore chargeable upon us, when we

have not in our own proper persons committed it; when we have in fact sustained no causal relation to it whatever. This is the point upon which we differ—not whether a man can be punished for what is not his own, but whether there is only one way of a thing's being his own. If there is a just moral sense in which an action can be mine without my having actually committed it, then there is a ground upon which it may be righteously imputed to me without my being the cause of it. Dr. Baird has nowhere proved that personal causation is the sole ground of propriety in actions. He asserts it and confidently assumes it, but nowhere proves it. His notion is that where there is guilt there must necessarily be the stain. We admit that guilt springs from the stain, but we deny that it is limited to the person in whom the stain is found. We contend that representation as really establishes the relation of propriety in actions as personal causation—that what a man does by his agent he as truly does as if he did it in his own proper person. The maxim expresses the common sense of mankind —*qui facit per alium, facit per se.* The whole system of sponsorship in society is founded upon it, and no commonwealth could hang together for a single generation if the principle were discarded. This is the principle upon which the imputation of Adam's first sin to us proceeds. He was our representative; he was our head or agent, on probation not for himself alone, but for all who should descend from him by ordinary generation. There can be no question that if he sustained this relation to us, we are implicated in all that he did in this relation. His acts are ours, and we are as responsible for them as if we had committed them ourselves. "We sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression."

According to this view there is consistency in the language of our Standards when it is said that what is imputed to us is not our own personal act nor the act of that which subsequently became ourselves, but the guilt of *Adam's* first sin. It was the one sin of the one man that ruined us. Accord-

ing to Dr. Baird it was no more Adam's sin than ours. The relation of his person to it was altogether accidental—it only happened to express itself through his will—but essentially it is ours in the very same sense in which it is his. What was peculiar to Adam is not imputed. If there is force in language or coherence in thought, Dr. Baird totally and absolutely denies that anything personal to Adam is charged upon us. What is now ourselves used him as an instrument. He was simply the paw which the roguish nature used to steal with. We are now the paws with which it continues to practice its villainy; the instruments are changed, but the agent is the same. We leave it to any man in his senses to say whether such an account is reconcilable with the language of the Westminster formularies. "The sin of Adam and Eve, which God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit,"[1] is explicitly affirmed to be the act, the personal act, of eating the forbidden fruit, and the guilt of *this* sin, this personal act, is what is said to be imputed. But, according to Dr. Baird, that specific act could not have been imputed: it was not the act of the nature, but only an accidental manifestation of what the nature had become. It was personal and not generic. "The action of plucking and eating the fruit was in itself, as a mere act, a matter utterly insignificant."[2] "We have shown already that the plucking and eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree was a mere accident following the heart-sin."[3] Now our Standards just as precisely assert that *this* was the *very* "sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created." "*By this sin* they fell from their original righteousness." Dr. Baird says that they *had fallen before* they committed the deed, and that the deed was only the proof of their fall; the Confession says, that the fall was the *consequence* of the deed, and that the deed was the judicial ground of the fall. It is perfectly clear that Dr. Baird does not teach the doctrines of the Westminster divines. They held that the personal offence

[1] Conf. of Faith, ch. vi. [2] Page 508. [3] Page 497.

of our first parents was imputed; he holds that only our own offence is imputed. To make it clear that they mean a personal act, they specify the act to which they trace the ruin and condemnation of the race. Dr. Baird says that the race was ruined before that act was committed, and that the act itself "was utterly insignificant, a mere accident, following the heart-sin." They teach that the formal ground of the imputation of the first sin is the representative relation of Adam to his race. Dr. Baird teaches that the formal ground of the imputation of the first sin is that his race committed it. It is imputed to them in the same sense and on the same principle as it is imputed to him.

We repeat, therefore—and we defy Dr. Baird to escape from the conclusion—that upon his premises there is no imputation of Adam's sin at all. It is not as *his*, but as subjectively and inherently *ours*, that we are held responsible for it. Upon the federal view the sin could not be ours, but as it was *Adam's;*—his personal relations to it were absolutely necessary to create our interest in it. He, as a person and not a nature, was our head and representative; and therefore, before we can be called to account, it is presupposed that he has acted.

In the next place, Dr. Baird utterly confounds the twofold relations in which Adam stood to the species as a natural and as a representative head. According to him they are one and the same thing. The truth is, then, that in strict propriety of language there is no headship at all. The nature in every case is the same, and the person is a mere channel of transmission. One man stands in the same relation to it as another, and instead of the parent representing the child, the nature represents itself in both. But, passing over this objection, the parental relation *ex necessitate rei*, according to Dr. Baird, is federal. In the very act of creation, "his Maker," we are told,[1] "endowed him with a prolific constitution, and in the blessing pronounced upon him at his creation, prior to any of the external actions by which the

[1] Page 305.

covenant of nature was formally sealed, he was ordained to multiply—to become of one the myriads of the human race. In all God's dealings with him he is regarded in this light as the root and father of a race who should proceed from him. They, by virtue of this derivative relation to him, were contemplated by God, as in him their head, parties in all the transactions which had respect to the covenant. Thus they sinned in his sin, fell in his apostasy, were depraved in his corruption, and in him became the children of Satan and of the wrath of God." Hence, to be a man and to be a covenant-head are the same thing. It is the propagative peculiarity which directly makes the child responsible for the parent, and the parent for the child. God could not have dealt with Adam but as a federal head. He did not appoint him to the office, but created him in it. "By the phrase *covenant-head* we do not mean that Adam was by covenant made head of the race, but that, being its head by virtue of the nature with which God had endowed him, he stood as such in the covenant. Adam sustained in his person two distinct characters, the demarkation of which must be carefully observed if we would attain to any just conclusions as to the relation he held toward us and the effects upon us of his actions. First, in him was a nature of a specific character, the common endowment of the human race, and transmissible to them by propagation with their being. Again, he was an individual person endowed with the nature thus bestowed on him in common with his posterity. Personal actions and relations of his which did not affect his nature were peculiar to him as a private person. But such as affected his nature, with him and to the same extent, involved all those to whom that nature was given in its bestowal on him."[1] Accordingly, Dr. Baird teaches that the Covenant of Works was not a positive institution into which God entered with Adam after his creation, but was the very form, and the only conceivable form, under which such a creature could be subject to the moral

[1] Pages 305, 306.

government of God. If not a word had been said concerning the forbidden fruit, and no limitation of probation introduced, it would still have been true that the apostasy of Adam would have been the apostasy of his race. His relationship as a parent necessarily implicated his seed in all that affected his nature. One more extract will remove all room for doubt.

"Here, however, it is necessary to enter more particularly into a consideration of the manner in which Adam was invested with the functions of a representative. That the cause of that office was the will of God is not disputed by any who recognize the office. But it is a question how the Creator gave effect to His will in this matter. Was it by a positive arrangement, unessential to the completeness of the constitution of nature, extraneous to it, superimposed upon it after the work of creation was complete? Or did he so order that the relation between the representative body and its head should be an organic one, a relation implied in the very structure of Adam's nature, incorporated with the substance of his being, and constituting an element essential to the completeness and symmetry of the whole system, physical, moral and spiritual? By many orthodox theologians of the present day it is held that the representative relation of Adam did not exist until the positive provision was made respecting the tree of knowledge, when it was constituted by a decretive act of God's sovereignty. We are constrained to take the opposite view, and to maintain with the older divines that the relation is as old as the first inscription of the covenant of nature on the heart of man in His creation. We look upon it as the essential element in the parental relation as it subsisted in Adam—the element which gives the family constitution all its significance."—pp. 308, 309.

Now we do not hesitate to assert that this complete confusion, or rather amalgamation, of the federal with natural headship is a total abolition of the federal, in the sense in which it is taken in the Westminster Standards. Their covenant is

an institution posterior to creation—an institution proceeding from the sovereign will of God, in which the essential elements of moral government were largely modified by grace. What those modifications were we shall not here specify, as they are unimportant to the point before us. It is enough to say that moral government and the Covenant of Works are not synonymous, but that the covenant was the special form which God impressed upon it after the creation of man. We say further that there is no reason to believe that, independently of the sovereign appointment of God, the character and conduct of Adam, considered simply as a creature, a moral creature, would have had any legal effects upon the destiny of his offspring. Each man would have been under the moral law for himself, and his fortunes would have been in his own hand. All this is clear if the covenant was subsequent to the creation. What say our Standards? The first covenant is represented as having "*been made with man.*" The inference would seem to be that man was already in existence. This is not the language which any one would adopt who intended to describe an innate law or a connatural principle. And although ingenuity may put it to the torture, and wring out of it an interpretation to suit Dr. Baird's hypothesis, no one can pretend that it is the simple and obvious sense of the words. But let us admit, for the sake of argument, that these words are not decisive: what shall we say to the teachings of the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, in which it is expressly affirmed that the Covenant of Works *was a special act of Providence toward man in the estate wherein he was created?* Providence presupposes creation, and here man's previous existence in a definite state is unequivocally affirmed, and the covenant is made with him as a creature existing in that holy and happy condition. The Larger Catechism[1] recounts first his creation, then his insertion into Paradise, the injunction to cultivate the garden, the permission to eat of the fruits of the earth, the subjection

[1] Question 20.

of the creatures to his authority, the institution of marriage and the Sabbath, the privilege of communion with God,—all these before it comes to the establishment of the covenant, making it as clear as the sun in the heavens that the covenant was regarded as posterior to the creation, and as by no means synonymous with that moral law which was confessedly the rule and measure of the holiness that he had as a moral creature. The Shorter Catechism removes all perplexity when it declares in so many words,[1] that "when God had created man he entered into a covenant of life with him." The Latin version is, "After God had created man," *post quam Deus hominem condidisset.* It is needless to pursue so plain a matter any farther. Dr. Baird and the Westminster Standards teach an entirely different doctrine as to the covenant, and, of course, as to Adam's federal headship. One makes both concreated with man—elements of his being as a moral propagative creature, his necessary attitude to God and his posterity. The other makes both the sovereign appointment of God—gracious dispensations of Providence towards him and his race—looking to a good which without such an arrangement he could have no right to expect. In support of these views we are happy to be able to cite an authority which we know that Dr. Baird sincerely respects, and which is likely to have more weight with him than any arguments that we can employ. Dr. Breckinridge has put this subject in its proper light in a work to which Dr. Baird has more than once referred, and referred to in terms which indicate a deserved appreciation of its value.[2]

Whatever, therefore, "the older divines" may have taught to the contrary, it is indisputable that the Westminster Assembly has represented federal headship as an instituted, and natural headship as an original relation, and has clearly distinguished between them. An instituted is not, however, to be confounded with an arbitrary relation. The appointment of Adam to the office of a federal head was not in

[1] Quest. 12. [2] Knowl. God Object., book v., c. 31.

contempt or defiance of the principles of equity and truth. His natural relations to his race rendered it consistent with justice that he should also be their representative. His natural headship, in other words, is the ground of his federal headship. The connection by blood betwixt him and his descendants constitutes a basis of unity by which, though numerically different as individuals, they may be treated as one collective whole. There is a close and intimate union, though not an identity, among the members of the human family. They are one race, one blood, one body—an unity, not like that of the Realists, growing out of the participation of a common objective reality, answering to the definition of a genus or species, but an unity founded in the relations of individual beings. It is this unity, and not the fancied identity of Dr. Baird, that distinguishes the Family, the State, the Church, the World. That the human race is not an aggregate of separate and independent atoms, but constitutes something analogous to an organic whole, with a common life springing from the intimate connection between the parts, is obvious from the very organization of society. There is one unity of nations, in consequence of which national character becomes as obtrusively marked as the peculiarities of individuals. There was one type among the Greeks, another among the Asiatics, still another among the Romans. The Englishman is in no danger of ever being mistaken for a Frenchman, and the Frenchman is not more distinguished from his Continental neighbours by his language than by his habits, his sentiments, his modes of thought. In the narrowest of the social spheres the same principle is at work, and families are as decisively different by their characters as by their names. These facts show that there is a bond among men, a fundamental basis of unity, which embraces the whole race. What it is we may be unable to define; we know, however, that it is connected with blood. This basis is that which justifies, but does not necessitate, God's dealing with the race in one man as a whole. So that Adam's federal headship is the immediate ground of our

interest in his sin, and his natural headship is the ground of the representative economy. Adam stood only for his children, because his children alone sustained those relations to him by virtue of which he could justly represent them. If required to specify precisely what that is which constitutes the unity, the nature and kind of relationship, we frankly confess that we are not competent to solve the problem. We do not profess to understand the whole case. We accept whatever God has thought proper to reveal, and whenever the curtain drops upon His revelation we lay our hands upon our mouth. In the mean time, although we cannot see the whole reason which is contained in natural or federal headship, we can see that the moral economy which admits of representation is supremely benevolent. If Adam had maintained his integrity, and we had inherited life and glory through his obedience, none would ever have dreamed that there was aught of hardship, injustice or cruelty in the scheme by which our happiness had been so cheaply secured. The difference of result makes no difference in the nature of the principle. Those who object do not remember that the law which made Adam our head and representative is the law by virtue of which alone, so far as we know, the happiness of any man can be secured. Without the principle of representation it is possible that the whole race might have perished, and perished for ever. Each man, as the species successively came into existence, would have been placed under the law of distributive justice. His safety, therefore, would have been for ever contingent. It is possible that if the first man with all his advantages abused his liberty and fell, each of his descendants might have imitated his example and fallen also. It is possible, therefore, that the whole race might have become involved in guilt and ruin. Some might have stood longer than others, but what is any measure of time to immortality? Who shall say but that in the boundless progress of their immortal being one by one all may have sinned? It is possible, nay, more, even probable; it is

quite sure that this would have been the case with some—that multitudes indeed would abuse their freedom and die. But to sin under such circumstances is to sin hopelessly. There can be no Redeemer if each man is to be treated exclusively as an individual. If we cannot sin in another, we cannot be righteous in another. If the principle of representation is not to be admitted into God's government, salvation to the guilty becomes hopelessly impossible. Under this principle multitudes are in fact saved, when without it all might have been lost. Hence, it is clearly a provision of grace introduced for our good, for our safety, for our happiness, and not as a snare or a curse. God had an eye to it when He constituted our species a race, connected by unity of blood, and not a mere aggregation or assemblage of similar individuals. He made Adam the root, because He designed to make him the head—the father, because He designed to make him the representative of all mankind. The natural constitution is evidently in order to the federal relation. Both are necessary in order to understand the doctrine of original sin. If we consider Adam merely as our first parent, his act is not necessarily the act of his child. If the paternal relation, such as it now obtains in the species, exhausted his relations to the race, it would be impossible to explain how they can be guilty on account of the first sin rather than any other. Even if it were granted that as a father he must propagate his own moral features, his children would receive them simply as a nature without being ill deserving on account of them, as a child might innocently inherit a distorted body which the parent had brought upon himself by guilt. The natural relation, therefore, taken as exclusive and alone, is wholly incompetent to bear the load of hereditary sin. There must be something more than parent and child in the case. It is vain to appeal to those analogies in which the offspring share in the sufferings incident to the wickedness of their fathers. The offspring do indeed suffer, but they do not charge themselves with guilt; their sufferings are calamities, and not punishments. There

must be some relation, legal and moral, by virtue of which the act of the parent becomes judicially theirs before they can be penally responsible. This relationship is established in the covenant. That makes the act of their parent their sin and their crime. The two relations together, the natural and federal, explain the whole case as far as God has thought proper to reveal it. I am guilty because Adam represented me. Adam represented me because I am his child. Birth *unites* me to him as faith unites me to Christ. The union in each case is the basis of the covenant, and the covenant is the immediate ground of condemnation or acceptance.

That Dr. Baird's doctrine of guilt and imputation is not that of the Reformed Church is susceptible of superfluous proof. We have not space for quotations in detail, but there are several considerations which show that whatever that doctrine might have been, it could not have been the scheme of Dr. Baird. In the first place, we acquit him of any sympathy with the mediate imputation of Placæus; but did it not occur to him that the theory of Placæus could never have been originated had the general sentiment of the Church been that we were actually guilty of the sin of Adam? Mediate imputation is an expedient for establishing a direct personal relation betwixt ourselves and the first transgression. It goes on the supposition that a man can be punished only for the sin which he has really committed. The problem it undertook to solve was how the sin of another could be made to stand in personal relations to ourselves, and the answer it gave was that we make it our own by a voluntary appropriation. Now, if it had been the doctrine of the Church that the sin of Adam was actually ours, it would have been ridiculously absurd to cast about for expedients in order to make us justly responsible for it. No one would ever have dreamed of doubting that a man is chargeable with his own sins. This mediate theory, therefore, is a pregnant proof that the form in which the Church held the doctrine was one which made us responsible for a

crime in which we had no causal agency. In the next place, the bitter and malignant opposition of Socinians, Remonstrants and Pelagians is wholly unaccountable if the Reformers taught nothing more than that a man was punished for his actual transgressions. This principle could not have been denied without abolishing moral distinctions. In Dr. Baird's doctrine the vulnerable point is our numerical identity with Adam. That being given, guilt and corruption follow as a matter of course. Now, if the Reformers had stated the doctrine in this shape, the opposition would have been to the principle and not to the consequence. Then, again, the Reformers, almost to a man, asserted the immediate creation, and denied the generation of the soul. Calvin treats the theory of traduction with utter contempt. It received hardly less favour among the divines of France, Holland, Germany, England and Scotland. But the theory of traduction is essential to Dr. Baird's doctrine. It is, therefore, certain that this doctrine could not have been held by the Reformers. These considerations are conclusive. But there is another to be added which makes assurance doubly sure. The Reformers all taught the imputation of our sins to Christ. Our ill desert, our guilt were charged upon Him, and yet they never dreamed of the blasphemy of making Him actually a sinner. Here, clearly, imputation implied responsibility for crimes on the part of One who was absolutely free from the stain, and who sustained no causal relation to them.

But how does Dr. Baird dispose of this case? Will the reader believe it? By a flat and palpable contradiction of every principle that he has sought elaborately to establish in the case of Adam and his posterity. He retracts his entire philosophy of guilt and punishment. We have never known a more remarkable instance of a theory breaking down under its own weight. He admits that Christ was our substitute; that He assumed our guilt; that He was held responsible for our sins. Was He, therefore, actually a sinner? Was the nature which He had numerically the same nature which

apostatized? and was it charged only with its own proper act? Not at all. Objective imputation does not involve subjective pollution. He simply sustains a relation to His people in which their sins are, "*in some proper sense*," to be regarded as His. What is this proper sense? The reader will mark the answer.[1] The substance is, that He was the federal head of those whose sins He bore, and who constituted one body with Him by virtue of, not a numerical identity of nature, but of a spiritual union subsisting between them —the very doctrine for which we have contended. He actually quotes with approbation the sentence of Owen, which is an unequivocal denial of his whole doctrine. "As what He (Christ) did is imputed unto them *as if done by them*, so what they deserved on the account of sin is charged upon Him." How true that if you expel nature with a fork she will return! Dr. Baird is reduced to the necessity of abandoning his whole theory of imputation, or of admitting that Christ was a personal transgressor.

As to the authorities which he quotes in the chapter *Of the Definition of Guilt and Imputation*, they make nothing for him. They only prove that guilt is inseparable from crime; no one denies that. They prove further that a man cannot be punished for a crime which is in no sense his own; no one denies that. But the real point in dispute is, whether there is only *one* sense, that of actual causation, in which a crime may be said to belong to us; and this point his authorities do not touch. Nay, if he had gone farther, he would have seen that these very authorities distinctly teach not only that we *can* sin, but that we *have* sinned vicariously. Then, again, Dr. Baird has quietly assumed that all those expressions by which the Reformers signalized our union with Adam, and represent his sin as ours, convey the idea of an actual participation in his offence. He has confounded union with identity. They clearly meant nothing more than that close and intimate relationship, springing from natural birth, which lies at the basis of federal repre-

[1] Pages 606, 607.

sentation. To be in him seminally and radically is not to be numerically one nature with him. It is to be like him and of him. As we have already said, they never taught an arbitrary imputation. They never taught that guilt was unconnected with crime; but they did teach that the crime might *belong* to a man, might be justly called *his*, where he was not implicated in the stain of it. If this is conceded, every passage which Dr. Baird has quoted in the chapter referred to goes for nothing. And that this must be conceded, we think capable of irrefragable proof. Although our limits do not allow us to enter into details, we must be permitted, in addition to the numerous quotations to be found in the popular treatises of theology, to close with one which we do not remember to have seen cited before. It is from the learned and venerable Coccéius. In allusion to the handle which Socinians made of the ambiguity of the word *impute*, he says: "They explain it to mean that God imputes the sin of Adam by thinking or judging that the posterity of Adam willed, thought, did, what Adam perversely willed, thought, did. Hence they represent God as judging those to be in existence who were only radically in being." That is, the Socinians charge imputation with making the descendants of Adam personally guilty of his sin. This would be to attribute an actual being to those whose existence was only potential. But, adds Coccéius, "*to impute, in the style of Scripture, is to judge that he has done a thing who has not done it; not to impute is to judge that he has not done a thing who has done it. To impute is either to condemn or absolve many individuals by one sentence, on account of the conjunction between them.*"[1] This is exactly our doctrine, the doctrine of the Westminster Standards and of the whole Reformed Church. But it is not the doctrine of Dr. Baird.

Dr. Baird says, "the opinion seems to be entertained by some that the attempt to base our relation to the covenant and to the apostasy upon our natural relation to Adam, involves, as a logical result, the doctrine of mediate imputa-

[1] Sum. Theol., chap. xxx., § 4.

tion." He refers to ourselves, but has entirely misconceived our doctrine. We have always held that the natural is the *ground* of the federal relation. The doctrine is explicitly stated in the article referred to.[1] What we objected to was the idea that the natural relation alone explains our guilt and corruption—that we must receive our nature from Adam precisely in the moral attitude which it occupied in him, simply *because* Adam was our father. We insisted then, and insist now, that the law of generation, singly and alone—the law that like begets like—does not explain even native depravity, let alone guilt; and that if guilt is conceived as attaching to us in the *first instance because* we have a corrupt nature, that is the doctrine of mediate imputation. We insisted then, and insist now, that the immediate formal ground of guilt is the covenant headship of Adam, that our depravity of nature is the penal consequence of our guilt in him, and that we are made parties to the covenant by the circumstance of birth or the natural relation to Adam. We stated then that Calvin held the doctrine to which we object. We are now prepared to say, after a thorough examination of the writings of that great man, that, although he has often expressed himself vaguely and ambiguously, we are convinced that his opinion at bottom was the same as our own.

Dr. Baird exults in the superiority of his theory to the current theology, on account of the completeness with which it solves the difficulties in relation to hereditary sin. We admit, very candidly, that in this case the only difficulty is in the theory itself. Given a numerical identity of nature transmitted from father to son, and its moral condition in the one is as explicable as its moral condition in the other. The murderer is the same whether found in a palace or a hovel, and the law seizes him wherever it finds him on account of a crime which his change of place cannot modify. But upon the supposition that Adam's children are not

[1] It was the article next but one preceding this one—the Review of Breckinridge's "Objective Theology."

Adam, but themselves—that they are new beings called into existence by the providence of God—two questions cannot fail to arise which have always presented difficulties in speculation. The first is, How can that which, now and here, begins its being, begin it in a state of sin without an imputation upon the character of God? The problem is to make God the author of the man without making Him the author of his sin. The second question is, How can that which is inherent, which comes to us from without as a conditioning cause, and not as a self-conditioned effect, carry the imputation of crime? How, as it exists in us, independently of any agency of ours, can it be contemplated with moral disapprobation, and render us personally ill deserving? The answers to these questions exhaust the different theories of original sin, and Dr. Baird congratulates himself that he has fairly got rid of them. Confident in the advantages of his position, he has assailed with spirit and vigour the stronghold within which Edwards and his disciples have thought themselves impregnable. We really enjoyed the fight, it being, as Lucretius observes, "a great satisfaction to stand in the window of a castle and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof, in the vale below." We felt all along that all that was necessary was for them to take the offensive, and very feeble guns would be sufficient to demolish the fortress in which Dr. Baird conceived himself so strong. He may succeed in weakening their defences, but they can utterly annihilate his. Their doctrine has difficulties, but his is an absurdity.

A complete answer to these questions in the present state of our knowledge we hold to be impossible. Until we are put in possession of the entire case, no solution that can be given will go to the bottom of the subject. There will ever remain phenomena which our philosophy does not cover. But at the same time we are confident that the solution must be sought in the line of those principles of natural and federal headship which the Scriptures so clearly reveal. These principles show, paradoxical as the thing may appear,

that the history of the individual does not absolutely begin with its birth. It sustained moral relations and was implicated in moral acts before it was born. This notion is essentially involved in the notion of a covenant. When Adam was appointed to this office, all his descendants, constituting an unity of body with him, sustained the same relations to the law and God which he sustained. Morally and legally they were in being; their interest in the covenant was just the same as if they had already received an actual existence. This being so, the sin of Adam must have produced the same judicial effects upon them as upon him. Their actual existence was to begin under the law of sin and death, as his was continued under it. God in calling them successively into being must, as the Ruler and Judge of the universe, produce them in the state to which justice had morally consigned them. The covenant, therefore, does explain the fact of their being sinners before they were born, does give them a history before their actual being. The only question is, Was the covenant just? That depends upon the fact whether natural headship creates an union with Adam sufficiently intimate to ground these judicial transactions. If it does the mystery is solved. We maintain that it does, but acknowledge very frankly that we do not fully see how. We understand a part of the case, and only a part. The thing which has always perplexed us most is to account for the sense of personal demerit, of guilt and shame, which unquestionably accompanies our sense of native corruption. It is not felt to be a misfortune or calamity, but a crime. We subscribe to every syllable which Dr. Baird has written upon this subject. Now, how shall this be explained? Discounting all the schemes which deny the fact itself and construe native corruption into native misfortune, there are but three hypotheses which are supposable in the case. The first is, we have really had a being antecedent to our birth, in which by a personal abuse of liberty we determined and conditioned our mundane history. The second is, that we had a being

in our substance, though not in our persons, which has determined the attitude of that substance. The third is, that we sinned in another, whose relations to us were such as to make him morally one with us. The first two hypotheses remove the difficulty, but they substitute a greater one. Of the two, if we were driven to choose between them, we should prefer the theory of a supersensible existence. The consciousness of guilt connects it with our persons, and the argument is a short one which concludes from this consciousness to a previous personal existence. Our nature is sinful; it could not have been made so without our act; that corrupting act could not have taken place in time, for corruption begins with our life in time. We must, therefore, have had a transcendent existence in which we could have conditioned the moral type of our appearance in time. Yet the objections to this hypothesis are unanswerable. In the first place, the notion of a timeless existence is itself utterly unintelligible. Every finite being is conditioned, and conditioned both by time and space, and an intelligible world of real, substantive existences without temporal relations is altogether contradictory. In the next place, it is wholly unaccountable how such a state, signalized by so momentous an act as that which ruined the agent, has so entirely passed from the memory as to leave no trace behind. Surely, if anything had impressed itself upon our minds, such a condition, so different from the present and so fruitful in its consequences, could not have failed to be remembered. Add to this the silence of Scripture, or rather the contrary teaching of Scripture in its necessary implications, and the argument is complete.

The hypothesis of Dr. Baird being no less untenable, we are shut up to the third scheme, which we take to be the scheme of the Bible. We cannot carry human existence beyond Adam, nor Adam's existence beyond that creative fiat which gave him his being on the sixth day. Then and there the species began, and began holy. The Scriptures further inform us when and where and how he lost his in-

tegrity. From the time of his disobedience all the race have borne the type of sin. There has been no holiness in the species from that hour to this, unless as supernaturally produced by the grace of God. It would seem, therefore, that the all-conditioning act which has shaped the moral character of the race was no other than the act which lost to Adam the image of God in the garden of Eden. Such seems to be the explicit testimony of Scripture. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. Either we are guilty of that act, or original corruption is in us simply misfortune. In some way or other it is ours, justly imputable to us, or we are not and cannot be born the children of wrath. But we are guilty; conscience testifies that we are guilty—that our native corruption is sin. But as we did not sin personally, as we did not sin naturally, we must have sinned vicariously. The only alternative is: In ourselves or in another. Ourselves are out of the question. Therefore we sinned in Adam, and our history truly began before our birth. Our appearance in time was not an absolute commencement, but moral relations preceded and determined it. In bringing us into the world sinners, God did nothing more than execute the decree of justice. As to the manner in which God executed that decree, the negative agency of withholding or not imparting the Divine image is sufficient to explain the effect. To be destitute of the image of God is to be in an unholy state, and the want of original righteousness necessitates positive corruption. But still the agency of God in the production of that corruption is purely privative and judicial. The case is this: The being to be produced is under the curse, exposed to the penalty of the law. That implies the withdrawal of the Divine favour as manifested in that highest proof of it, the Divine image, and that implies the dominion of sin. This is precisely the doctrine of our Standards. There is, first, guilt, then the want of original righteousness, and then the corruption of the whole nature. This is also the doctrine of Calvin, who expressly repudiates natural generation as an adequate ex-

planation of depravity. His words are: "For the human race has not naturally derived corruption through its descent from Adam, but that result is rather to be traced to the appointment of God, who, as He had adorned the whole nature of mankind with most excellent endowments in one man, so in the same man he denuded it."[1]

Dr. Baird deceives himself with an analogy which, as illustrating the unity of the race, is perfectly proper—the analogy of the seed to the plant and the oak to the acorn. But when an argument is derived from a figure of speech, the figure should be pertinent to the very point on which the argument turns. Here the design is to show that one man has corrupted the race in the way of nature because all have sprung from him. The true comparison, in a case thus contemplating derivative individuals, is not that of an acorn to the oak, but of a parent oak to other oaks which have come from it. God did not at first make acorns, but trees, and these trees produced the acorns, and these acorns have perpetuated forests. If, now, an oak in full maturity should drop an hundred acorns, and these acorns grow into an hundred other oaks, the question is, Would these hundred oaks be numerically the same with one another and with their parent stock? And would this whole forest die if the parent tree should happen to decay? This is the case which is parallel with Adam and his posterity, and we humbly think that it gives no help to those who can see nothing but nature in the propagation of sin.

But if imputed guilt makes Adam's descendants really and personally corrupt, how shall we exempt Christ from the operation of the same penal consequence? He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and yet was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. The judicial displeasure of God did not involve Him in personal sin. But, in the first place, it is overlooked that Christ never existed as a human person. He had our nature, but the person was that of the Eternal Son. In consequence of the intimate relation-

[1] Comment., Gen. iii. 7.

ship of the human nature in Him to the Divine Logos, that nature was pervaded, conditioned and determined, in all its habitudes and in its whole being, by an influence which preserved it not only from sin, but from the possibility of sin. Jesus was what no other man ever was or ever can be but as made so by Him, absolutely impeccable. It is a mystery how His Divine person, without disturbing His human liberty, or absorbing His human consciousness, or interfering with His human properties, or diminishing the moral significance of His temptations, could yet make it certain that He should never fail. But the case is even so. It was in consequence of this mystery that the enduring of the penalty by Him was an act of obedience. Others suffer from necessity. He obeyed, achieved an active righteousness, as truly in His death as in His life. As the judicial displeasure of God could not destroy the personal union between the two natures, it could not destroy that life of God in His soul which is the condition of all holiness. He could not have become a sinner without ceasing to be Divine. His case, therefore, is altogether *sui generis*. In the next place, it is equally important to recollect that he stood as the head of a covenant, as a new beginning of the race, or rather of his seed. *He* was the *representative*, and not those whose sins He bore. If they had been His head, then the case would have been parallel with the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. But He was not in them—they are not the centre of union—but they are in Him, and He is, accordingly, the source of influence. In the third place, the very nature of His undertaking required Him to be stronger than the curse. The penalty could not crush Him as it buries a creature in death, and therefore He is declared to be the Son of God, with power by His resurrection from the dead. The case of Christ, therefore, is no manner of exception to our argument, that guilt, resting upon grounds of representative unity, must as necessarily entail a fall to the creature as personal transgression.

We have already intimated that we regard Dr. Baird's ac-

count of the covenant as seriously defective. He looks upon it as a natural institution, essentially contained in the moral law, as addressed to such a creature as man. He confounds the state of man, considered simply as a moral agent under a dispensation of moral government, and the state of man as in covenant with God. We have not space now to enlarge upon this error. We shall content ourselves with an exhibition of what we take to be the teachings of Scripture and of our own Standards. As a moral creature, invested with the image of God, man was under the law as a servant, bound to execute his master's will, with no promise but the continuance of the Divine favour as he then enjoyed it. The condition of his servitude was perpetual innocence. As long as he obeyed he would remain holy and happy as he was. As soon as he disobeyed he was to die. His state was contingent, dependent upon his legitimate use or the abuse of his liberty. As a moral creature, moreover, he was treated purely as an individual, and had no change taken place in his relations, each man as he came into being would have been on trial for himself. Now the covenant of works was a special dispensation of God's goodness, modifying this state in several important respects. Its aim was twofold—to change the relation of man from that of a servant to a son, and to confirm him indefectibly in holiness, which is the essential notion of life. To achieve these ends the period of probation was first made definite, and the notion of a completed righteousness or justification introduced. In the next place, the persons on probation were limited, and one made to stand for all, and thus the notion of imputation was introduced. In the third place, the field of temptation was contracted, and the question of obedience made to turn upon a single positive precept, which brought the will of man directly face to face with the will of God. Had man obeyed, he would have been justified, and as that justification is the equivalent of perpetual innocence, it must have secured it, and man have been rendered immutable in holiness. This subjective change in his will from mutability to impecca-

bility would have been accompanied with an external change in his relations from a servant to a son. This twofold change would have realized the notion of life. Upon this view the covenant is a conspicuous manifestation of the goodness of God. But it is a view totally inconsistent with Dr. Baird's notions of the constitution of man, and therefore, with him, the grace of God retreats before logical consistency.

One more thought and we have done. We regret that the importance which Dr. Baird attaches to the propagative property of man has led him to rank this among the elements which enter into the biblical notion of the image of God. In the relation betwixt a parent and his child he detects a resemblance to the ineffable relation betwixt the first and second persons of the Trinity, and, what is still more remarkable, in our faculty of breathing he finds a representation of the procession of the Holy Ghost. This last is a pure fancy; there is nothing approximating to an analogy, much less to a resemblance of the things themselves. That there is some analogy in the first case may be admitted, but that is very far from proving that the analogy is any part of the Divine image. Man in his dominion over the creatures sustains a relation analogous to that of God as Supreme Ruler, but dominion over the creatures is treated in the Scriptures as a consequence, not as an element, of the image. The phrase has a specific, definite sense, abundantly explained in the Scriptures themselves, and we should neither add to it nor take from it. Least of all should we trust to fancy as its expositor. One thing would seem to be certain, that nothing can be included in it which is shared by man in common with the brutes. To propagate their species and to breathe is characteristic of all terrestrial animals, and as, in these respects, the dog and the goat stand on a level with man, we are conscious of something like the degradation of a grand subject when we undertake to define the Divine image by such properties.

We shall here pause. We have singled out the prominent parts of Dr. Baird's book, in which we find ourselves unable

to agree with him. It would have given us more pleasure to have dwelt upon the many fine features of it which we can most cordially approve. It is by no means a commonplace work. The very consistency with which he has carried through a single leading idea, and interwoven it with the texture of a difficult and complicated discussion, shows the hand of genius, and the power of disciplined thought. We thank him for his incidental deathblows to popular errors, and we love him for the zeal and heartiness with which he clings to the glorious doctrines of grace. If in the points in which we have differed from him we have said anything personally offensive, it would give us more pain to discover it than it can give him to read it. We are conscious that we have written under a strong sense of personal esteem, and we are sure that Dr. Baird will reciprocate the wish that, in relation to the matters in dispute, each of us may seek exclusively for truth. We adopt the noble language of Socrates in the Philebus of Plato: *νῦν γὰρ οὐ δήπου πρός γε αὐτὸ τοῦτο φιλονεικοῦμεν, ὅπως ἃ γὼ τίθεμαι, ταῦτ' ἔσται τὰ νικῶντα, ἢ ταῦθ' ἃ συ, τῶ δ'ἀληθεστάτω δεῖ που συμμαχεῖν ἡμᾶς ἀμφω.*

APPENDIXES.

PREFATORY NOTE TO APPENDIXES.

Appendix A is Dr. Thornwell's Inaugural, delivered on the evening of the 13th of Oct., 1857, at the Presbyterian Church of Columbia, S. C., in the presence of the Board of Directors of the Seminary, and of many members of the Synod of South Carolina on their way to its meeting at Laurensville the next day. He had, however, actually entered on the duties of the Chair of Didactic and Polemic Theology during the previous year.

Upon that occasion the Rev. Dr. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, first pronounced a solemn charge to the Professor, who then subscribed the usual formula binding him to teach nothing contrary to the standards of the Church, and delivered this Inaugural. It was not read, nor did he have it before him; but, as his manner was, having written it by way simply of preparing his mind for the effort, he delivered it far more fully in many parts than it was written, and throughout the whole of it in words which came to him on the occasion. Those whose privilege it was to be present can never forget the fervour and the force with which he gave utterance to the views presented in this discourse. He had written it the night of the 12th of October at one sitting, but, as he said, "with his mind at a white heat."

Appendix B consists of the questions of Dr. Thornwell, of which he made use in examining his classes upon the Lectures. It is proper to say that for the Lectures upon Original Sin, upon the Pollution and Guilt of Sin, and upon Degrees of Guilt, the full form of his questions could not be found, and it was necessary to supply the gap with a few questions from a more summary form found amongst his papers; and that his Questions upon the State and Nature of Sin are not a complete copy.

Appendix C is an Analysis of the most important Chapters of Calvin's Institutes, with Notes and Comments by Dr. Thornwell. The *Institutio* was his text-book, and he used these papers in examining his classes. They are, of course, brief and informal, and sometimes quite familiar and abrupt in style, but they are deemed too intrinsically valuable to be omitted here.

Appendix D is composed of Dr. Thornwell's Questions to his Classes upon the Institutes. They are confined to the most important Chapters of Book I.

APPENDIX A.

DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY

DR. THORNWELL,

UPON BEING INAUGURATED AS PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY.

I TRUST that I am not insensible to the solemnity of this occasion, nor to the momentous character of the relation into which I am about to enter. When, a little more than twenty-two years ago, I was set apart by the imposition of hands to the general functions of the ministry and the special duties of a pastor, I felt that my position was a solemn one, and the text from which on that occasion the usual sermon was preached, "Who is sufficient for these things?" exactly expressed my sense of the magnitude and grandeur of the duties I had assumed. The cure of souls is a burden; however, like the Redeemer's burden, it is lightened to those who sincerely and humbly seek His glory. It is a burden—a burden upon the conscience and a burden upon the heart—but still a burden of that peculiar kind that he who has once borne it would rather bear it on for ever than be released from it. He feels it a greater burden to be without it than to have it. That burden I have ever since carried. When, three years afterward, I was called to mingle in another sphere the elements of Divine and human knowledge, and to minister at the altars alike of philosophy and religion among those who are pre-eminently the hope of the land, I felt that I had undertaken an arduous trust—that I stood in relations of grave responsibility to the Church and to the State. But those occasions, solemn as they were, and serious and awful as the duties they imposed, yield to this in the magnitude of the trust and the strength and emphasis of the obligations imposed. A single parish, though it contains immortal souls—and one soul is more precious than the world—is yet a comparatively narrow sphere; the circle of relations and the compass of operations can be partially measured. A charge

like that of the College, though it touches upon many and complicated interests, is yet for the most part bounded by the State. The *sphere* here is not incommensurable. But the office of a teacher in a school which aims to prepare a ministry for the whole Church and for a dying world, which aims to realize the ascension gifts of the Saviour in evangelists, pastors and teachers, until the whole body of Christ shall be gathered and the bride be adorned to receive her husband at His second coming in glory and majesty and power,—a trust like this no mortal may lightly assume it; an angel's intellect cannot gauge the extent and magnitude of its influence. It is that trust, deep, awful, momentous, whose consequences lose themselves in the abyss of an unfathomable eternity, bearing alike on the destinies of redeemed and lost; it is this trust which I am to assume this night. Unborn souls are destined to wail or rejoice at these transactions. Who is sufficient for this work? Fathers and brethren, not I!—with profound impression of the truth I say it, Not I! And, like Moses, as I buckle on the armour of a graver warfare than I ever waged before, I utter from the heart the prayer of conscious weakness: "If thy Spirit go not with me, carry me not up hence." Nothing reconciles me to these perilous responsibilities but the full persuasion that God, through you and the operations of His Spirit upon my own soul, has called me to the functions for which you have girded me to-night.

I have reached a crisis in my life, and as I stand to-night and look back upon the past and forward to the future, I can distinctly see that the cloud has led me by day and the pillar of fire by night; and though it has often been by a way that I knew not, I now perceive that all my training, whether moral, intellectual or spiritual, the bent of my studies, the peculiar turn of my mind, my cherished tastes and my chosen speculations, have all been controlled and modified and shaped with reference to the solemnities of this hour. God had this night in His own eternal view when in yonder college walls I rose up early and sat up late to store my mind with that knowledge which I then designed to make only an instrument of ambition. I can understand that spell which bound me to Homer's matchless verse and the immortal tongue in which Demosthenes wielded at will "the fierce democratic of Athens." I can comprehend the mysterious charm which the Stagyrite threw around me, and the enchantment with which I listened to Schoolman and Monk as they discoursed in mood and figure of the high problems of existence. I can understand the fascination with which I loved to go with Socrates to the market or listen to Plato's lectures, and to his great pupil, "the intellect of his school" (*Jop*, though his companions called him), when he built up the whole encyclopædia of knowledge. Up to this point, by God's help, I have safely come; I can praise Him for the past, and I hope that I am not unprepared to trust Him for

the future, and with my whole heart I hereby consecrate myself with what little knowledge and little experience I have been able to gain,—I consecrate all freely, unreservedly, for ever, to His glory and the service of His Church.

The security which you have exacted from me, that I shall not indulge a licentious liberty of speculation, nor teach for doctrines the commandments of men; the restraints which you have put upon the excursions of philosophy or the conjectures of fancy; the limits within which you have wisely and righteously bound me,—are no oppression to my spirit. The pledge which I have solemnly given, that I shall neither directly nor indirectly teach any doctrine contrary to the venerable Standards which I have just subscribed, I mean faithfully to redeem. I was not born in your department[1] of the kingdom of God; it was that Confession which first drew me to you. Your noble testimony for God and His truth brought me into your communion, and the same love to your doctrines which first induced me to cast in my lot among you continues to burn in my bosom, and to inspire me with zeal for the propagation of those doctrines in all wise and proper methods.

I am not ashamed of that Confession of Faith. I am not ashamed of the men who formed it, of the men who adopted it, of the noble army of martyrs and confessors who have sealed its doctrines by their blood. When the Long Parliament of England had itself solved the question, What is human liberty? and reduced to practice the answer which William the Silent had before given, two centuries in advance of his age, as to the foundation and ends of civil government; when this body of true and immortal Englishmen had answered the question, What is liberty? they collected a nobler assembly than had ever met in St. Stephen's Hall before, and proposed to them the question which Pilate proposed to Jesus, What is truth? What is the truth of God? The answer of this venerable conclave of learned, praying, godly divines was your Confession of Faith. It was the answer of religion to freedom; it was the faith that made the mighty men of war and peace—which distinguished a period in which were deposited the seeds of all that has been noble, generous or great in the history of England or America from that day to this. Then and there the marriage rites betwixt Liberty and Truth were duly solemnized; from that period they have gone hand in hand, and are destined to keep together until they shall finally, in their Master's name and by their Master's power, subdue the world! Ashamed of the Westminster Confession of Faith? the inspiration of Heroes and Sages, of Martyrs and Philosophers?—a faith that has founded states, immortalized kingdoms and redeemed countless multitudes of souls from the thral-

[1] Dr. Thornwell's mother was a member of the Baptist Church.

dom of slavery and sin? No, never! I love it, sir, and love it with all my heart, and bless God that in His providence I was permitted to see that book with a knowledge of which my earlier years had not been blessed as yours were—though, thanks to a noble mother, I was taught from the cradle those eternal principles of grace which that book contains. Your Church is the Church of my adoption, your ministry the ministry which God led me to seek when he called me into the kingdom of His Son; and your Church I love, not as a sect, not from personal, private or political considerations, but for her noble testimony, her glorious history, her moral power, her spiritual freedom—the mother of heroes and saints, of scholars, orators and statesmen, a blessing to this world and a sure guide to everlasting joy. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. For, lo! the kings were assembled, they passed by together; they saw it and so they marvelled, they were troubled and hasted away. I would say of her as David of his darling Jerusalem: "If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning! If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!"

But this general view of what I am to teach as not contrary to and as consistent with the Confession of Faith is hardly a sufficiently exact description of the scope and sphere of the department which you have committed to my hands. The occasion requires that I should more minutely and accurately sketch my own conceptions of the nature of the work I have to do, and of the manner in which it should be done. You will bear with me, then, while I unfold, as briefly as I can consistently with clearness, the scope of Theology, its claims to be considered as a science, and the principle which should regulate the arrangements of the parts and their combination into a complete and harmonious whole.

I. The first question is, What is Theology? What is that definite and precise matter which distinguishes it from every other department of inquiry, and gives to it the unity and consistency which pertain to a science?

1. The word *Theology*, compounded of two Greek terms, properly implies a discourse of which God is the subject. The speculations of Pherecydes and Hesiod concerning the origin of things were styled *theological;* they themselves were called *Theologians*, and their cosmogonies denominated *theologia*. But the gods of the Muses were very different from the God with whom we have to do, and the generations and works which poetry, fiction and idolatry ascribe to the deified heroes of Olympus have nothing in common with the sublime fiat of our God, who sitteth in the heaven upon a throne of unchangeable being, and who has but to speak and it is done, to command and it stands fast. Still, these early and crude cosmogonies illustrate the

tendency of human speculation to begin at the beginning, and I am quite sure that no adequate conception can be framed even of our own God without taking in the great fact of creation. A system of Theology cannot possibly ignore this truth without halting at every subsequent step. The Bible opens with God as Creator, and there is hardly a passage in the Psalms or Prophets in which God distinguishes Himself from the false gods of the heathen without appealing to the circumstance that He is the Creator of all things. Modern writers on Natural Theology have paid entirely too little attention to this peculiarity, and have consequently been content with a proof of His being and perfections which represent Him at best as only a huge man—the great Mechanic of the universe. But it would be preposterous to constitute creation as the adequate subject of Theology; that is only one skirt of the Divine glory.

Neither again would it do to confine *Theology* to a discussion of the essential relations of the Godhead, the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit; as the mythologists applied the term to analogous discussions concerning the dependences and births of their numerous brood of divinities. Plato used the word in this restricted sense as a discourse concerning the Divine nature, and the early Fathers of the Christian Church followed the example. Athanasius, Photius and Theophylact confine it to discussions concerning the Trinity; others give it a wider application, to any discourse of which the being and perfections of God are the subject; others restrict it to the consideration and proof of Christ in contrast with his humanity; and others apply the title to the Scriptures themselves, as being a discourse concerning the being, perfections and glory of God.

In all these cases there is a *περὶ θεοῦ λόγος*, but the aspect under which God is contemplated is too narrow and contracted to express what is now meant by *Theology*.

2. But we are not to suppose, on the other hand, that there can be an adequate knowledge of God—that He can be the object of a science in any such sense as that we can deduce from Him, from the essential perfections of His nature, the laws, properties and conditions of all existing things. Such knowledge would be science in the highest and most absolute sense, but such knowledge is the prerogative of God alone. It is to me passing strange that any man should ever have dreamed of an absolute knowledge of anything. Our science can never transcend our faculties, the soaring eagle can never outstrip the atmosphere which supports it. We know the essences of nothing; we cannot think a substance in itself; we cannot detach it from its properties and adjuncts and lay our fingers upon that secret, invisible, mysterious something which we construe in thought as the centre and bond of union and coexistence to these multifarious phenomena. We

know not matter, we know not our own souls, and how can we know God?

All our knowledge is relative and phenomenal, measured by our faculties and confined to appearances. But as far as it goes it is real—phenomena are not a sham; they are the indications of realities which transcend themselves and are embraced by faith.

Hence, the law of all human science is *induction*. We do not begin with things in themselves and then deduce their properties and manifestations, but we begin with appearances, and after ascending to our highest generalizations are compelled to admit that the thing itself still lies beyond our reach in the boundless domain of faith.

The incomprehensibility of God as an object of science is the universal confession of all classes of divines.

3. Then we are confined to phenomena, to manifestations, to the works of God. Now we advance one step farther: Is that knowledge of God's being, character and perfections which we are able to derive from His works, however complete and perfect it may be, that knowledge in which God is considered simply as a subject to be investigated and known,—is that the knowledge which Theology, properly so called, has in view? Is simple cognition the end of this knowledge, or does it exist merely as an intellectual relation to its object? Certainly not. This would be to degrade God and to make *Metaphysics* and *Theology* synonymous expressions. The knowledge of God which Theology has in view is the knowledge of God as the supreme good—the knowledge of God as the full and perfect and everlasting portion of the soul. It subordinates every other department of truth; it lays its hand upon every science, makes excursions into every field of speculation, but it brings all its treasures and lays them at the feet of a just Ruler and a merciful Redeemer. Theology, then, is precisely and definitely the science of true religion, or the science of the life of God in the soul of man.

4. This distinction applies as well to the nature as to the end of the knowledge, and hence what we now call *Theology* was by the primitive fathers and by the apostles, and even our Saviour Himself, called simply *knowledge*. It is a peculiar kind of cognition, like the perceptions of the moral faculty, and to distinguish it we call it a *living* knowledge in opposition to a formal apprehension. Here is the real source of traditionalism; it is not that the truth is systematic, but that the truth is not apprehended in its true character; it is not that there is science, but that the phenomena of the science are misunderstood.

II. The next point is, Can it be called a *science?*

The answer depends on what is meant by *science*.

1. If *science* is taken in the subjective sense for habitual knowledge, Theology is pre-eminently a science. Its truths are the very bone and

sinew and marrow of a Divine life—the very moulds into which the whole frame of the mind is cast. The perfection of science in this sense is indicated by the ease and spontaneousness of congruous acts, as in Rhetoric, Grammar, Logic.

2. If *science* is objectively taken for a mere logical and systematic arrangement of dependent and connected truths, there can be but one answer, unless it is affirmed that there is no distinction here of more and less general.

3. But if by *science* is meant a deduction from principles intuitively given, and a demonstration from the nature and properties of its matter, then there is no science of God, but at the same time there is no science of anything else. All knowledge begins in faith; principles must be accepted, not proved, and it matters not whether you call them principles of faith or reason.

4. But it is said that there is no unity of matter—God, angels, men, creation, providence, etc. But there is a unity of *relation*, and it is under that relation that they fall under the consideration of theological science.

5. If by *science* is meant the highest certainty of reflective knowledge, then we have it here in a pre-eminent degree.

6. It is the *queen science*. It makes all other sciences ministers to God, and draws a Divine life from them. It quickens knowledge and converts speculation into life.

III. I come now to the arrangements and method of the science.

Theology as a science was slowly developed in its reflective form. The first creeds were accepted as facts, and men lived upon the truth without having traced the deep philosophy which pervades it. It was a life, but not a system. The successive controversies which arose reduced to scientific precision the great doctrines of the Trinity, of the incarnation and of grace; but still a complete view of the whole system of doctrine in its logical coherence was not attempted until the eighth century, when the foundations were laid of the scholastic Theology in the work of John Damascenus. He was followed by John Scotus Erigena, who applied the method of Aristotle to the questions of religion. The scholastic Theology received a fuller development at the hands of Lombard, the Master of the Sentences, and its final consummation in the great work of Thomas Aquinas. These productions of the Middle Ages are not without their value, and he who applies to them with a discriminating search will find many a jewel in the heaps of rubbish which cover it.

1. The first great division is a division according to the sources:

Into *Natural and Revealed Theology*. This is not to be confounded with the distinction of Natural and Revealed Religion, which is indeed a distinction in the thing itself, in the matter considered. But who in

constructing a science of minerals would distinguish them according to the senses which report their properties? Truth is truth, and the divisions of a science should spring from its object-matter, and not from contingent circumstances and relations.

2. Into *Dogmatic and Polemic, or Elenctic.* This is only a division of the mode of treating it, and as the science of contraries is one, it appears to me that every didactic treatise is obliged to be in some degree polemic.

But taking Dogmatic Theology as a science, is there any principle in the whole system which can be called central, and around which all the parts may be made to revolve? Is there any feature which gives shape and position to every other feature? Two such principles have been proposed—(1.) In the Dutch school the doctrine of the Covenants; and (2.) In more recent times, the fact of redemption, the incarnation, or the Person of Christ.

There are serious objections to both these methods considered as logical exhibitions. The theory of the Covenants makes an accidental feature—the mode of administration—determine the character of the thing administered. It has advantages, but also disadvantages, and much has to be postulated as prior to the covenants which in this view does not constitute a part of the whole. It does not exhaust the subject. But to start from redemption, or from incarnation, or from the Person of Christ, gives us no point of logical connection with natural religion. Grace and nature are widely separated states, and the religion of grace and the religion of nature have no bridge between them.

Without criticising farther the method of others, I proceed to indicate the principles upon which, in my judgment, the whole subject can be logically treated without confusion, mixture or undue separation of parts.

The central principle of all Theology is *justification*, and every Divine system of religion is only the answer which Divine wisdom gives to the question, How shall a moral creature be justified? If that creature be considered simply as a creature in the image of God, the answer is the Religion of Nature; if that creature be considered as fallen, as a sinner, the answer is the Religion of Grace. Here the principle evidently rules the parts; they grow out of it and spring from it, and there is not a single doctrine of religion which may not directly or remotely be traced to it. Let us consider this more distinctly.

1. The principle of justification is not an original and essential principle of moral government. All which *that* implies is a law, a moral subject and a just ruler. Continued obedience would be continued favour, and one transgression, ruin. Here, each man is a unit, and his moral responsibility is in himself and for himself alone. The relations

through the law are the only ones which are essential and enter into the case. Now, while these individual relations and this individual responsibility are maintained, the principle of justification (1.) *limits probation* as to time, which is an act of infinite grace; (2.) *concentrates it* as to persons; whence federal headship—all are put into one. And here we may see the folly of the objection that I ought not to have been represented in Adam. The alternative was no limitation of probation at all, or a limitation as it pleased God, and a condensation as to the rule or measure of obedience.

Here, then, starting from the principle of justification, you have, *first*, the great doctrine of moral government in its essential principles presupposed; you have, *then*, the modification of that government in the Covenant of works and the whole system of natural religion; and, *more than all*, you have individual responsibility fully harmonized with covenant representations—a point which no other scheme attains.

2. The same thing is seen when you come to revealed religion. The question is, How shall a sinner be just with God? and the solution of that problem in consistency with the essential principles of moral government necessitates all the provisions of the covenant of grace. Hence the incarnation, hence the mysterious and wonderful person of the Saviour, hence His astonishing humiliation, His life of poverty, sorrow and obedience, and His death of agony and shame; hence His glorious resurrection and ascension, and His coming at the last day to judge the world. All the facts of His history and mediation depend upon God's purpose to justify the ungodly.

3. But it may be said that this view leaves a sinner just half saved—out of hell, but not fit for heaven. Here consider what it involves, the very essence, indefectibility before the fall, union with God after the fall—in other words, the *guarantee of holiness*. This is precisely what we are *justified to*—the very inheritance to which we are adopted.

This method is certainly exhaustive. It presents truth in its logical order, and, above all, it cuts up by the roots many erroneous systems of Theology. The whole doctrine of a precarious and contingent holiness is given to the winds, and the feet of the saints are established on a rock. And it explains precisely how they are individually and personally under the law, and yet in no danger of condemnation.

IV. The sources of Theology.

1. The facts of revelation. It is a science already developed in its principles, and to be received and mastered by us. The instrument employed is a sound interpretation under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit. But the theologian has not done his work when he has simply accepted his principles.

2. Many of these principles are found in ourselves, in the light of reason, and the two sources are to be blended.

3. But there is a higher work in evolving the philosophy of the whole system, and showing how it accords with the indestructible data of consciousness. We may carp and cavil at philosophy as we will, but it is a fundamental want of the human soul and cannot be dispensed with. Reflect man must and will, and religion has no sanctity to protect it from the torch of a searching inquiry into its principles. The error into which we may fall is twofold:

(1.) We may proceed on the assumption that Theology is to be constructed from consciousness—that the Divine life within us is the rule and measure of it. This is a radical mistake; it is the rule and measure of that Divine life. We must try our hearts by it, and not it by our hearts.

(2.) We may go to the Scriptures with a preconceived system, and endeavour to harmonize their teachings with our illusive crotchets. This is the stone over which the New England theologians have fallen and broken their necks. They have made the Bible an appendix to their shallow and sophistical psychology, and to their still shallower and more sophistical ethics.

4. Now, the true method is to accept the facts of revelation as we accept the facts of nature. We are by enlightened interpretation to ascertain the dicta; these are to be received without suspicion and without doubt. They are the principles of faith. Then from these principles proceed to the laws, the philosophy if you please, which underlies them, and in which they find their explanation and their unity. In this way we shall reach truth, and shall be partially able to harmonize it with all other truth.

5. But we must never forget that all cannot be explained. Our knowledge is a point, our ignorance immense. But we can know enough to glorify God, and to save our souls. We can know enough to make us sure that the unknown is full of glory and beauty.

Thus feebly have I sketched the work I have to do.

1. Is it not vast? God, Creation, Providence, Angels, Men, Heaven and Hell!

2. Is it not most important? Other knowledges bring comfort, power, wealth—this is eternal life.

3. The peculiar responsibilities of a religious teacher in this age. Irreligion is now a religion, a philosophy. An ignorant ministry will no longer do. God bless us, our Seminary, His Church and our work!

APPENDIX B.

QUESTIONS UPON THE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY.

LECTURE I.

WHAT is said of the dignity of Theology as a science?

2. How would you answer the objection that the word *Theology* is not found in Scripture?

3. How was the term used among the ancient Greeks?

4. How among the Christian Fathers?

5. When did it assume its present significance?

6. In a wide sense what does it embrace?

7. As restricted to a particular science, how has the science been divided?

8. What is meant by *thetic* and *antithetic* theology?

9. What terms have supplanted these?

10. Define *Theology* as hereafter to be used.

11. What are the objections to considering Theology a science?

12. Answer these objections.

13. What would you say of the question, whether Theology is a speculative or practical science?

14. What is the object of all religion? How would you show that religion is not exclusively subjective and one-sided?

15. What terms must be given in order to construct a science of religion?

16. Into how many parts may a complete treatise of Theology be divided?

17. In regard to the sources of Theology, what three answers have been given as to the Principle of Theology?

18. Refute the Romanist.

19. What is the true function of the Church?

20. State the scheme of the Rationalist, and refute it.

21. What is the Protestant doctrine?
22. The office of reason in regard to Revelation?

LECTURE II.

1. What are the three questions concerning God?
2. Why has this subject elicited so much speculation?
3. What has been one occasion of perplexity?
4. How does it appear that the proofs of the Divine existence must lie very close to our faculties?
5. What does the universal belief of a God prove?
6. Would the kind of reasoning which disproves the existence of God stop at that point? What other truths does it equally overthrow?
7. What is the process of argument contained in the lecture?
8. What is the nature of religion as a form of life?
9. What are the three elements contained in it?
10. What is the law which lies at the root of speculative reason?
11. Upon what occasion does this law give us necessary being?
12. What two factors in the argument?
13. Is it a syllogism? What is it?
14. What has Kant called this proof?
15. What is the datum upon which this law gives an intelligent being?
16. What is this argument called?
17. Apart from the first, what is its defect?
18. What is the ontological proof?
19. What is its value?
20. Develop the argument from conscience.
21. What do Kant and Hamilton say of this argument?
22. Show that every step increases our knowledge of God.
23. Develop the argument from the religious nature—the instinct of worship.
24. What form does it assume in the Christian heart?
25. In what sense is the knowledge of God natural?
26. Is our knowledge immediate or mediate?
27. Are the principles above enumerated the only ones which enter into any argument?
28. Show their application to the argument from geology, from history, from miracles and from a Divine revelation.

LECTURE III.

1. What is the question discussed in this lecture?
2. Show how it emerges, and the importance of an answer.
3. What is the ignorance of God which is justly attributed to the natural man?

4. To what causes is it ascribed?
5. What is the relation of Satan to the human soul since the fall?
6. How does he operate on men?
7. In what light must Paganism, Popery, Mohammedanism and Infidelity be regarded?
8. Is the responsibility of man diminished?
9. Illustrate human depravity in general as a disturbing element.
10. Show its influence in the sphere of speculation.
11. Show its influence on the imagination, and state the results.
12. Show the power of an evil conscience acting through the attractive and repulsive principle of religion in our fallen nature.
13. Explain the influence of the instinct of worship.
14. Define and prove spiritual ignorance as the inheritance of all men.
15. Specify the general benefits of revelation to any people.
16. What is the estimate of the moral character of heathenism?

LECTURE IV.

1. What question do we now come to touching God?
2. What is the first extreme answer that has been given?
3. What has been the problem of recent philosophy in Germany?
4. What is the other extreme answer? Quote its language.
5. What seems to be the truth?
6. Is our knowledge of God subject to the conditions of all other knowledge?
7. Mention three conditions of human knowledge.
8. What, then, is the real amount of our knowledge of mind and matter?
9. What two elements enter into all knowledge of the finite?
10. How are they conjoined?
11. What two elements enter into our knowledge of God?
12. How are they conjoined?
13. What is the real import of the law of causality?
14. In relation to the infinite how does it appear?
15. Quote Calvin's Commentary on Genesis, etc.
16. What is the *matter* that is thought in the concept of God?
17. What is the threefold method of ascending from the finite to the infinite, noted by the Pseudo-Dionysius?
18. Illustrate it.
19. What notion of God is the mind thus lead to postulate?
20. What is an absolutely perfect being?
21. What is the distinction between the infinite and the absolute?
22. What is the result when both are applied to God?

23. Show that it abolishes the distinction between the possible and the actual.

24. Quote Howe's Living Temple.

25. What are the two elements which enter into our positive notion of God?

26. How do we attribute the finite perfection to God?

27. What is meant by *analogy?*

28. Quote Berkeley's Minute Philosopher.

29. What criticism on this passage?

30. What is the importance of the negative element in our conception of God?

31. Recapitulate the sum of the foregoing discussion.

32. What is said to be the Catholic doctrine of Theology on this point?

33. Quote Calvin's Institutes.

34. How would you answer the objection that our knowledge of God, according to this view, is delusive and deceptive? State the objection first, and then solve it.

35. Show that it applies equally to all human knowledge.

36. Where would it lead if consistently carried out?

37. What is truth, and what is the test that a given representation is true? Quote Mansel.

38. What confusion of ideas does the objection involve?

39. How would you show that our partial, relative knowledge is adequate for the purposes of religion? Show it first in general.

40. Show it specially with reference to the threefold state of man.

41. Show how this view of our knowledge connects our natural and our religious life. Quote Mansel.

42. Show how the two elements of our knowledge complete the notion of religion.

43. How the belief of the Infinite heightens devotion.

44. Show the harmony of our doctrine with the teaching of Scripture. Quote Mansel again.

45. Show the consequences of our ignorance of the absolute.

LECTURE V.

1. What is the design of the names of God in the Scriptures?

2. What is the peculiarity of these names?

3. What is the difference between *denote* and *connote*, *notative* and *connotative?*

4. What is the difficulty in determining the connotation of those proper names of God which are not attributive?

5. Why in the earlier stages of Revelation are names of God more numerous than in the later?

6. How many names of God does Jerome enumerate among the Hebrews?

7. State the defects of this catalogue.

8. What is the import of the word *Sabaoth?*

9. What three names in Jerome's catalogue are probably the same?

10. What are the two most important names of God in the Hebrew Scriptures?

11. How are they rendered in Greek?

12. Into how many classes of sections may the Pentateuch be divided with respect to the use of them?

13. What is said of the extent and variety of this usage?

14. What is the first name of God employed in the Hebrew Bible?

15. How do you explain its plural form?

16. Show that it is not a plural of majesty or intensity.

17. Why is this term used in the account of the creation?

18. What are the two most probable etymologies of this word?

19. What is its connotation according to the first?

20. What is its connotation according to Delitzsch?

21. What objections to this connotation?

22. What is its connotation according to the other etymology?

23. Which connotation is most probable, and why?

24. Explain the analogical application of this term to kings and magistrates.

25. How does Cocceius explain this term?

26. What is the next most important name of God?

27. Why called *tetragrammaton?*

28. What is the superstition of the Jews with reference to it?

29. Show that it was known and used among the patriarchs.

30. Explain Exodus vi. 2, 3.

31. What is the absolute signification of *Jehovah?*

32. What is its relative signification to us?

33. Why can it not be analogically applied to other beings?

34. What would you infer from the application of this name to Christ?

35. Mention some uses of this word which justify the above exposition.

36. What is the origin and import of the word *Jah?*

37. What is the meaning of *Adonai?* of *Shaddai?* of *El?* of *Elyon?*

38. What are the names of God in Greek?

39. Explain their use in the New Testament.

40. What end have these various names served in the progress of Revelation?

LECTURE VI.

1. What distinction do you make in answering the question whether God can be defined?
2. Show that, strictly speaking, He cannot be defined at all.
3. Show that He can be described in terms equivalent to a definition.
4. Criticise the definition, God is the absolutely perfect Being.
5. In what does Perrone place the essence of God?
6. What four conditions does he make essential to an essence?
7. Does his own definition fulfil these conditions?
8. How do we proceed in defining God?
9. What brief definition is specially commended?
10. What defect is suggested in it?
11. How does the notion of attributes arise?
12. Does the distinction of *essential* and *non-essential* hold in relation to the attributes of God?
13. On what ground is it maintained that there is no real distinction among the attributes themselves?
14. How is it explained that the *one* appears as the *many?*
15. Explain what is meant by real and virtual or eminent distinction.
16. Is this distinction a sufficient explanation?
17. What is the synthetic method of enumerating the attributes of God.
18. What sevenfold scheme of classification is signalized?
19. What is said of the agreement in these various schemes?
20. What is said of the terms *communicable* and *incommunicable?*
21. What is Dr. Hodge's classification?
22. What is Dr. Breckinridge's?
23. What objections to it?
24. What simpler classification is proposed?
25. In what order should the whole subject be treated?

LECTURE VII.

1. What is the importance of the spirituality of God?
2. In what Scripture is it expressly affirmed?
3. How does Vorstius interpret that passage?
4. State his reasons, and show their inadequacy.
5. How else is it taught in Scripture? Cite passages.
6. What was the doctrine of ancient philosophers?
7. In what two lights may the spirituality of God be considered?
8. Negatively taken, what does it imply?
9. What is said of the Anthropomorphites?

10. What is said of Tertullian?
11. How are those Scriptures to be interpreted which attribute bodily organs to God?
12. What kind of organs is attributed to Him?
13. How is the immateriality of God proved from Scripture?
14. Explain Exodus xxiv. 8–10.
15. What is positively involved in the spirituality of God?
16. What is a self-conscious subject?
17. Are we directly conscious of self, or is it only an inference?
18. From what phenomena is a direct consciousness manifested?
19. Given a Spirit, what is the first thing contained in it?
20. Illustrate the life of God.
21. What is the nature of God's activity, and what is said of this species of action?
22. What is said of the unity and simplicity of God?
23. What is said of the communicativeness of God?
24. What are the falsehoods involved in image-worship?

LECTURE VIII.

1. What is the subject of this lecture?
2. How are these attributes classified, and what are they?
3. What is meant by the Independence of God?
4. How has it been otherwise expressed?
5. What forms of expression are censured?
6. Is the idea conveyed negative or positive?
7. How would you prove it?
8. Is it confined to the being of God?
9. How has Eternity been defined?
10. How alone can we conceive Time? Can we conceive Eternity?
11. What is said of Eternity *a parte ante* and *a parte post?*
12. What is implied in the notion of Eternity?
13. What is Immensity? How does it differ from Omnipresence?
14. What is the relation of spirits to space, bodies, God, as expressed by Schoolmen?
15. Is God mixed with the creature, or present by diffusion?
16. What is virtual presence, and is it the only presence of God?
17. Prove Immensity from Scripture.
18. How does the God of the Bible contrast in this respect with heathenism?
19. In what other senses may God be said to be present?
20. Show the value of Immensity as a regulative truth.
21. What is the All-sufficiency of God?
22. What is the distinction between *formal*, *eminent* and *virtual*, as applied to the modes in which perfections are predicated of God?

23. Show the regulative value of this truth.

24. What is Immutability, and how involved in every notion of the Absolute?

25. Prove it from reason and from Scripture.

26. How reconciled with the fact of creation? of the incarnation? with finite changes?

27. Explain those Scriptures which speak of God as changing, repenting, etc.

28. What is the regulative value of this truth?

29. How does an unchangeable God differ from fate?

30. Mention some points of dissimilitude between God and man.

31. What follows as to our competency to judge of His ways?

LECTURE IX.

1. What five conceivable hypotheses touching the relations of the finite and infinite?

2. Why do we discount those of the Atheist and Eleatic?

3. Why may we discount that of the Dualist?

4. What, then, is the real issue that remains?

5. What is the prevailing tendency of philosophy?

6. To what is the question between Pantheists and Theists reduced?

7. What is the fundamental postulate of Pantheism?

8. How is the notion of creation represented as contradictory.

9. How is it shown to be inconsistent with the idea of the absolute?

10. What is the objection from the will of God? State the whole series of difficulties.

11. What is the objection from the existence of evil?

12. What general answer may be given to these four classes of objections?

13. How would you answer specifically the first objection, that the notion of creation is contradictory?

14. How would you answer the second, that it is incompatible with the absolute?

15. How would you answer the third, from the will of God?

16. How the fourth, from the existence of evil?

17. What are the steps by which it is shown that creation is the natural faith of mankind? Mention the first averment of consciousness.

18. What is the second truth clearly given in experience?

19. What is the third proposition?

20. What must be the conclusion?

21. How does it happen that speculation diverts us from this natural faith?

22. Show that no creature possesses creative power.

23. What is the teaching of the Scriptures in relation to creation?
24. What proof of their Divine origin is hereby furnished?

LECTURE X.

1. What is the importance of the knowledge of Man?
2. What elements unite in him? Hence called what?
3. What is his general position?
4. What is the method pursued in treating of man?
5. How may his distinguishing features be briefly expressed?
6. What are they? Explain the conditions of intelligence.
7. What is conscience? What is will? What are passions?
8. Show the immutability of the soul.
9. What is said of the threefold life in man?
10. State the arguments for natural immortality.
11. What are the theories as to the primitive condition of man?
12. What is the importance of this subject?
13. What is meant by *in puris naturalibus?*
14. Show that this is not the primitive state of man.
15. Prove that man was created in maturity of knowledge.
16. Give the Scripture arguments on the subject, direct and indirect.
17. Show that man's original state was not savage.
18. Explain what is meant by the *image of God.*
19. Was the holiness of man contingent or immutable?
20. What different theories to explain the psychological history of sin?
21. State the Pelagian, and that of the Papists, and that of Bishop Butler.
22. What objection to this theory?
23. Where must the true solution be sought?
24. What is the true doctrine of the will?
25. What conditions must a just theory of the will fulfil?
26. What is the universal doctrine of divines as to the mutability of man's will?
27. What was the end of man's creation?
28. What is implied in his being a servant?

LECTURE XI.

1. What is the importance of rightly understanding the essential principles of Moral Government?
2. What is the defect of the definition which makes it consist in a government whose rule of obedience is the Moral Law?
3. Give an exact definition.
4. Whence the notions of justice and of merit? Define conscience.

5. Show that the cognitions of conscience, though logically distinct, are really inseparable. Illustrate each cognition.

6. How are moral rules elicited?

7. Show that man was under such a government from the moment of his creation.

8. What does the conviction of good and ill desert imply?

9. What is the effect of one sin upon the sense of good desert?

10. What is the reward of mere moral government?

11. Does moral government imply representation?

12. What is the relation of man to God under moral government?

13. What are the essential differences betwixt a son and a servant?

14. Prove the doctrine of this lecture from Scripture.

15. Explain the difference betwixt moral government and moral discipline.

16. Under what circumstances is discipline possible to a sinner?

17. Recapitulate the whole lecture.

LECTURE XII.

1. What was the general design of the dispensation under which man was placed immediately after his creation?

2. What is implied in sonship?

3. What was the motive to this arrangement on God's part?

4. Illustrate the riches of this grace.

5. What was necessary in order to convert a servant into a son?

6. What modification of moral government was accordingly introduced?

7. What principle did this modification introduce?

8. Explain the nature and effect of justification.

9. In what sense are these modifications of moral government (adoption and justification) arbitrary?

10. How was man to be made acquainted with them?

11. What follows as to the nature of the religion which was always exacted of him?

12. What is this dispensation of religion called?

13. What is a covenant? and what error must we avoid in speaking of a covenant betwixt man and God?

14. What are the essential things in a covenant?

15. What other modification of moral government was introduced into this covenant?

16. How would you show that the principle of representation is a benevolent principle?

17. What is the ground of representation?

18. Whom did Adam represent? Was Christ included?

19. Explain the operation of the two principles of natural headship

and federal headship in relation to the promises or threats of the covenant.

20. How would you show that federal headship is the immediate ground of imputation?

21. What are the two principles introduced by the covenant which pervade every system of religion?

22. What peculiarity in relation to duties does the condition of the covenant evolve?

23. Explain Butler's account of the difference of the moral and positive.

24. Point out its defect. State the truth.

25. Why must the positive give place to the moral?

26. Show the fitness of testing man's obedience by a positive precept.

27. What was the precept? Why was the tree so called?

28. What other explanations of this tree have been given? Refute them.

29. What is the error, or rather, exaggerated statement, of the Dutch divines?

30. Was the moral law also a condition of the covenant?

31. In what relation did the twofold elements of the condition stand to each other?

32. How would you show that the moral law is the permanent condition of life?

33. What special consideration is here urged?

34. How does it appear that the covenant must have had a special promise?

35. Does Moses record the promise?

36. What is the first argument that shows a special promise?

37. What is the express teaching of Scripture?

38. What is the third argument from redemption?

39. What, then, was the promise? What elements included in life?

40. What is the import of the tree of life?

41. What was Warburton's theory of the Covenant of Works?

42. What is the last point to be considered in relation to this covenant?

43. How have the answers given to this question been modified?

44. What is the *death* threatened, according to Warburton?

45. Why do some exclude temporal or natural death and disease?

46. To what do others restrict the penalty?

47. How are we to ascertain the truth upon this subject?

48. What is the scriptural meaning of *death?*

49. Is pain a necessary proof of guilt?

50. What was the first form of death threatened in the covenant?

51. How could a single sin produce a state of total depravity?
52. What was the second form of death?
53. What was the third form of death?
54. How long did Adam stand?
55. What is the first circumstance mentioned in the natural history of sin?
56. What is the second?
57. What was the nature of the sin by which man fell?
58. What were its aggravations?
59. What are the general relations of the human race to God since the fall, apart from redemption?

LECTURE XIII.

1. What is Original Sin? Explain the different usage of the word.
2. What are the elements embraced in the doctrine?
3. To what point may the whole question of its truth be reduced?
4. How does it appear that man is utterly destitute of righteousness?
5. How would you explain the moral excellence of unconverted men?
6. What is the ground of this native depravity? Explain the different theories.
7. What is the ground of federal representation?
8. Can we understand the whole subject? What analogies illustrated?
9. How is native depravity propagated?
10. Is there any importance in the question as to the origin of the soul?

LECTURE XIV.

1. Recapitulate briefly the history of man as thus far presented.
2. What is his present state, and how is he dealt with?
3. What fine passage from McCosh referred to as an illustration?
4. What is the importance of the fall in solving the mysteries of Providence towards man?
5. What is the method pursued in treating of the state of sin?
6. What is the first point to be considered?
7. What is the first and most obvious determination of sin?
8. What does the law regulate in man? Show that it is not restricted to external acts or internal resolutions.
9. How can permanent states be matter of responsibility?
10. How, then, may sin, materially considered, be defined?
11. How is sin distinguished from vice or immorality?
12. Is the will of God the ultimate standard of right?
13. What is the ethical ground of the supremacy of the Divine will?

14. Is the doctrine of creation essential to moral government?

15. What, then, is the normal attitude of the soul to God?

16. How is this supreme devotion realized?

17. Is love, materially considered, the fulfilling of the law?

18. What is the real ground of love to the creature?

19. Annul the notion of creation, and could there be any moral ties among the creatures?

20. Subjectively considered, what becomes the nature of sin?

21. How is this reconciled with disinterested affections?

22. What has been the consistent teaching of divines as to the subjective nature of sin?

23. Show how selfishness leads to the violation of the whole law.

24. What other question remains to be asked?

25. What is said of the theory which resolves moral distinctions into pure will?

26. What general objection to all theories which resolve virtue into prudence, or benevolence, or sympathy?

27. What is the only unity they admit in rectitude?

28. What kind of a cognition is that of the right?

29. What is the real ground of the unity of all its concrete manifestations?

30. Develop fully the notion of holiness in God.

31. Develop next the notion of holiness in man.

32. The analogy betwixt holiness and life.

33. In what aspect does holiness contemplate God?

34. How, then, may it be defined?

35. Show the distinction betwixt morality and holiness—the right and the good.

36. Is a sense of duty the highest principle of action?

37. According to this account, how does sin first appear?

38. Explain the distinction betwixt privation and negation.

39. Has privation been generally considered a complete explanation of the nature of sin? The doctrine of Augustin, of Lombard, of Reformers.

40. Why has the purely privative character of sin been so strenuously maintained? Cite authorities.

41. What distinction in vindication of this theory has been made between sin in the concrete and sin in the abstract?

42. Explain Augustin when he says that "there is no sin which does not attach itself to the good."

43. What is the first argument against this theory drawn from its double confusion?

[Remainder wanting.]

LECTURE XV.

1. What two inseparable properties of sin are there?
2. What is the stain—the *macula?*
3. Show the relation between the beautiful and the impure—religion and art.
4. What is the sentiment proper to sin as the vile?
5. What is the precise sphere of the operation of this sentiment?
6. Under what condition is it most powerful?
7. What is guilt? actual? potential? *in primo actu? in secundo?*
8. What is the natural expression of the sense of guilt?
9. Analyze remorse.
10. Show the inexorable necessity of punishment.
11. The effect upon a community of the relaxation of this sentiment.
12. Show the hopeless necessity of sin arising from one sin.
13. The eternity of punishment.
14. What circumstances repress the full effects of sin here?
15. Scripture usage of *guilt.*
16. Importance of the distinction betwixt stain and guilt.
17. Papal distinction—*reatus culpæ* and *pœnæ.*

LECTURE XVI.

1. Are all sins equally heinous? Show from Scripture.
2. The Stoic paradox.
3. The Confession of Faith.
4. The ground of these distinctions.
5. Sins of ignorance, presumption, weakness.
6. What does every sin deserve?
7. Venial and mortal sins.
8. Sin against the Holy Ghost.

APPENDIX C.

ANALYSIS OF CALVIN'S INSTITUTES,

WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS.

BOOK FIRST.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE CREATOR.

CHAPTER I.

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF OURSELVES.

ALL solid wisdom consists of two parts—the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves. These are the terms that must be given in order to constitute the possibility of religion.

2. Each necessary to the other; each implies the other. If we look at ourselves—

(1.) Our dependent and contingent being suggests the eternity and independence of God.

(2.) His bounties suggest His fullness—our consciousness of self-insufficiency, His self-sufficiency.

(3.) Our misery and destitution, His glory and blessedness. This is the point at which we generally begin to seek Him.

3. But then, again, there can be no true knowledge of ourselves without a knowledge of God.

He is the only standard of comparison by which we can be made sensible of our imperfection and unworthiness.

To him that had never seen a perfect specimen of whiteness the dingy may appear white, and the eye knows not its weakness until it attempts to gaze upon the sun.

4. That we are made deeply sensible of our own worthlessness by

the knowledge of God is evident from the consternation and alarm which manifestations of God have made even upon the saints. Hence the saying, None could see Him and live.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT IT IS TO KNOW GOD.

As this book begins with the knowledge of God, this second chapter defines what is meant by the knowledge—that is, the kind of cognition which enters into Theology.

1. It is that knowledge which lies at the foundation of religion, which produces and cherishes true piety—not the knowledge of the ontological fact there is a God, nor of the metaphysical fact that He is the first cause, but of the moral fact that He is our Good. Hence, Theology is the *science of religion.*

Now, religion is twofold—one the religion of man in innocence, the other the religion of man as a sinner. There is, therefore, a twofold Theology—one the knowledge of God which fed the religion of Adam before he fell, the other the knowledge of God in Christ.

It is the first knowledge which is discussed in this book. The other is discussed in the second book. The view of God or sense of God which produces religion is that of God as the supreme Good.

2. Hence, religion contemplates rather the character and relations of God to the creature than the Divine essence.

This whole paragraph possesses great beauty.

CHAPTER III.

NATURALLY THE HUMAN MIND WAS IMBUED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

To the question, Whence have we the knowledge of God? this chapter answers—

1. It is natural. It is in the human mind by natural instinct.

(1.) Shown by universal sense of religion.

(2.) Specially shown by idolatry, to which a man could not degrade himself without a strong impulse to worship.

2. Religion is not a factitious and artificial sentiment. Politicians could not have used it as an instrument had there not been the original susceptibility in human nature.

This further shown by the fact that professed atheists on alarming emergencies, when nature acts spontaneously, give utterances of their dreadful sense of God, as in the case of Caligula.

3. This sense of God is ineradicable. It is the real instinct to the true end of our existence. The whole passage deserves to be thoughtfully weighed. It asserts in divers forms the intuitive knowledge of

God, or that it is an original element of intelligence, and particularly of conscience. Religion is the true end of man, acknowledged by Plato and by Gryllus in Plutarch. This is his characteristic excellence.

CHAPTER IV.

THROUGH IGNORANCE AND THROUGH MALICE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD STIFLED OR CORRUPTED.

This chapter undertakes to solve the phenomenon that while the knowledge of God is natural, it confessedly produces no real piety among men as long as they are left to themselves. The seed never matures into a fruit-bearing tree. The causes are ignorance and malice—the ignorance inexcusable because it is the offspring of pride, vanity and contumacy.

1. Superstition is described, and traced to vanity and pride. The reasoning is that of Rom. i. 22.

2. The malicious are next described in an explanation of the fool who, according to the Psalmist, has said in his heart, There is no God—the man who is anxious to get quit of a moral administration that he may revel in his crimes.

3. Having considered the two classes, he next considers the vanity of superstition considered as an expression of true worship. It is said to proceed from a religious *spirit* and to indicate a religious life. The true ground and rule of worship shown to lie in the *truth*. All will-worship offensive.

4. He shows, in the last place, that malice often joins hands with superstition, and produces a monstrous religion of stupid rites and slavish fears.

This chapter is a very just picture of the religious condition of mankind without the enlightening and sanctifying grace of God.

CHAPTER V.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AS DISPLAYED IN MAN HIMSELF, IN CREATION AND IN PROVIDENCE.

In addition to the knowledge of God involved in the very constitution of the mind, this chapter considers the manifestations of the Divine glory in the creation and government of the world.

1. They are asserted to be so clear and conspicuous that nothing but the most wilful blindness can fail to perceive them. The Psalmist (civ. 20) calls light His garment. It was the first dress in which God made Himself visible. The heavens are His tents, etc.

Every *particle* of the world bears witness, but the universe as a whole contains a testimony of overpowering splendour. Hence, the

heavens declare His glory (Ps. xix. 1), and the visible things His invisible (Rom. i. 19).

2. Though the manifestations of God are more numerous and striking to the eye of science, yet enough to leave us without excuse can be perceived without science. Science only multiplies the instances. It gives a greater number of special adaptations, but hardly deepens the sense of general order.

3. Among these mirrors of God in nature, man himself is pre-eminent. Hence, he has been called a microcosm. We do not go beyond ourselves to seek God. The Psalmist (Ps. viii.) passes from the heavens to man. The heathen poet calls us God's offspring.

4. The traces of God in man, the elements of proof in his soul and body, are mentioned briefly as a rebuke to our stupidity for not having and retaining the knowledge of His name. If such a body as that of man is governed by such a soul, shall the universe be without a mind? The passage is striking in relation to the worm five feet long.

5. The argument from the faculties of the soul, its rare endowments, its independence in its highest operations upon the body, its moral discernment and its impress of immortality, is pursued. The notion of a soul of the world contained in the celebrated verses of Virgil, Æneid vi. 724, and in Georgics, iv. 220, is exploded. Calvin objects to the phrase that Nature is God, though he admits that it may be used in a good sense.

6. The Divine power is especially illustrious in the sustentation and guidance of this mighty fabric, and in storms, earthquakes, thunders, lightnings and the management of the seas. His power as *Creator* leads us to His eternity and to His goodness as the motive of creation.

7. Calvin now calls attention to a class of works out of the ordinary course of nature. He alludes to those flagrant instances in providence which show as if with the finger the real character of God. The general lessons of providence are in favour of moral government. They teach God's benignity to the righteous and His disapprobation of the wicked. Still, the righteous are often depressed and the wicked flourish. But these flagrant instances of signal punishment or reward leave no doubt, and give us a key in the prospect of a future state to the inequalities of the present dispensation.

8. In this aspect may be contemplated the astonishing contrasts which Providence often produces in the lives of men. They were signalized by the Psalmist (Ps. cvii.); similar contrasts are constantly presented now, and they illustrate the power and wisdom of God—the desperateness of the case showing forth His power, and the timeliness of the aid His wisdom.

9. This manner of knowing God in His works seems to be singularly

suited to promote piety. It brings Him before us, not in His essence, but in His perfections, in His actual workings, in His benefits, and shows us a Being not only good, but ceaselessly doing good.

10. It furnishes the sure ground of hope of a future life; it shows us a moral administration begun, but not finished. The phenomena of Providence point as with a finger to a future judgment.

11. And yet while such are the tendencies of nature, no man, if left to it alone, ever attained a true knowledge of God.

(1.) With regard to the structure of the world and the ordinary course of phenomena, we stop at the works themselves, or content ourselves with secondary causes, and never inquire after God.

(2.) With respect to striking events in providence out of the usual course, we ascribe things to fortune and not to God; or, if forced to admit the finger of God, we corrupt His name by our vain imaginations.

None seek after God; high and low, ignorant and philosophers, all alike have departed from Him to stupidity and folly.

12. The vanity of the human mind is shown in the multitude of gods it has introduced, and the multitude of fictions in relation to them. It is a spring bubbling up with idols. This blindness in relation to the true God conspicuous among the most refined and cultivated. The philosophers who attempted to maintain a show of reason have stumbled and fallen. Illustrated in the case of the Stoics and the mystical theology of the Egyptians.

The endless dissensions of philosophers led the Epicureans to the shorter method of denying any true God—an equal instance of blindness.

The answer of Simonides to Hiero a confession of inability to know God.

13. All worship which is founded in the opinion of man, however specious, is treated in the Scripture as apostasy. Common sense has never led to the true glorifying of God.

(1.) The Ephesians in their unconverted state are said to have been without God.

(2.) The whole Gentile world, Paul says, knew Him not.

(3.) Even the Samaritans, our Saviour says, worshipped they knew not what.

(4.) Paul articulately declares that the world by wisdom knew not God; and this is evinced by the fact that the custom of their ancestors or the authority of the State were sufficient grounds of worship.

14. Hence it follows that nature alone leads no one to God. We suffocate her light. Divine teaching must be superadded. God must reveal Himself by the illumination of His word and Spirit.

15. Still, this ignorance is without excuse. The difficulty is in us.

It is our lethargy, our ingratitude, our vanity and pride that darken the mind. This concluding section is very beautifully expressed.

Notes.

1. The importance of a devout contemplation of nature. We should habitually look upon it as God's workmanship, and all its beauty, order, benevolent arrangements we should attribute to Him. We should endeavour to feel that all His works praise Him and give Him the glory which they represent. Man should be the interpreter, the tongue of their mute doxologies. Second causes and laws must not conceal Him.

2. Providence we should study as the key to God's character and His estimate of us. Our relations to Him as sinners, His character as holy, and His gracious purpose to us, after all furnish the key.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEED OF SCRIPTURE TO GUIDE MAN TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

The design of this chapter is to show that there is no true knowledge of God from the light of nature without Revelation.

1. To those who have known Him, God has always made Himself known by His word. The Jews were so instructed, the Christian Church is so instructed. Revelation is not only necessary to teach the plan of salvation, but to teach the doctrines of natural religion. Without it we cannot know the Creator of the world. Calvin here uses a fine figure. To a man of weak vision a book is presented; he can see that there are characters, but cannot distinguish them. You give him spectacles and he reads distinctly. Nature is such a book; man in his fallen state has weak eyes. Revelation is the spectacles.

2. The reality of the Revelation was plain to those to whom it was made. It certified itself. It was committed to writing that it might be preserved and transmitted free from corruption. Of course, the main design of the Law and Prophets was to teach the doctrines of salvation, but they also teach the doctrines of natural religion. These are presupposed as the basis of the scheme of grace.

3. Hence no true method of knowing God but by Revelation. Here alone have we the key for the interpretation of nature.

4. Hence the frequent contrasts between the lights of nature and Revelation, and hence all are said to be without God who have not the Word. Even the Samaritans worshipped they knew not what.

CHAPTER VII.

SCRIPTURE DOES NOT DEPEND FOR ITS AUTHORITY UPON THE CHURCH.

THE design of this chapter is to explain the ground of the authority of Scripture, and how we come to know that it is Scripture.

1. Supposing a Divine revelation admitted, there can be no question as to its authority and the ground of it. But when the question is whether such and such books are Divine revelations, how are we to determine what books to receive and what to reject? Here it is said the Church must decide. She determines what is and what is not Revelation, and her decision is authoritative.

2. This answer reverses the doctrine of the apostle, who makes the Church the creature of Scripture, and not Scripture the creature of the Church. She is built on the foundation of prophets and apostles. Eph. ii. 20. Scripture judges the Church, and not the Church Scripture. She pays homage to Scripture, but does not constitute it. How, then, are we to know Scripture? It authenticates itself, its light is in itself. A man judges of it as he judges of tastes, smells and colours.

3. The sentiment of Augustin, that "he would not believe the Gospel unless moved by the authority of the Church" (Cont. Epist. Fundaments. c. v.), means only that the testimony of the Church is a valid argument or motive to induce an unbeliever to investigate the claims and contents of Scripture. The Church proposes their doctrines as Divine, and testifies to her own faith in their divinity. This testimony should induce the lover of truth to examine the question, and he may soon find himself a true believer through the teaching of God's Spirit.

Augustin evidently uses authority in the sense of a strong motive; it is her proposing and witnessing to Divine truth that he alludes to. This proved by a passage from chap. iv. of the same treatise.

4. The real ground of the authority of Scripture is the reality of its being a Divine revelation. Its authority is the authority of its Author. That it may exert this authority there must be a certain and infallible persuasion that it is the word of God. This certain and infallible persuasion is produced only by the illumination of the Spirit. What are called the evidences of Christianity, its historical proofs, are of use in conciliating attention and in leading to the study of Scripture, but they can never produce anything but opinion. They cannot give birth to a faith which establishes the heart. The Word contains the evidences of its own origin, the Spirit enables us to perceive them. The Word is objective light, the Spirit subjective light; their concurrence produces spiritual vision or faith.

5. This, then, is the result of the whole matter: the Scriptures are self-authenticated, and the Spirit enables us to apprehend their

Divinity, not as a matter of reason nor as a blind credulity, but as an intuitive perception. They come home to the spiritual sense with a life and power which show them to be Divine. Faith is a Divine intuition above reason, and not dependent on it. Hence, the promises of Divine teaching. Hence, too, the spiritual ignorance in the world.

NOTES.

1. The true authority of the Church is happily expressed by Melancthon (*De Ecclesia et Auct. Verbi Dei*, p. 124): "We are to hear the Church as a teacher and admonisher, but are not to believe on account of the authority of the Church; for the Church does not make—she only teaches and admonishes articles of faith. The truth is to be believed only on account of the word of God when, having been admonished by the Church, we perceive that the doctrine is really and unequivocally delivered in the word of God."

2. The same doctrine is repeated in the *Loci Communes*, p. 229: "Wherefore the Church is to be heard as a teacher, but faith and invocation lean only on the word of God, not on human authority."

This testifying power Melancthon considers important as a bridle upon the extravagance of men in broaching new-fangled doctrines. But the Word is ever supreme.

CHAPTER IX.

THOSE ARE FANATICS WHO SUBSTITUTE THEIR REVELATIONS FOR SCRIPTURE.

THOSE who reject the Word under pretence of being led by the Spirit are guilty of madness as well as error.

1. The Spirit always produces reverence for the Word. Isaiah signalizes the union of the Spirit and the Word, not only as a mark of the Church in pupilage, but of the Church in its highest maturity. (Isa. lix. 21.)

Paul caught up into the third heavens still studies the Word, and commends the study of it to Timothy. (1 Tim. iv. 13.)

The Spirit as promised to the apostles was to bring to their remembrance the words of Christ. (John xvi. 13.) He teaches, impresses and seals the Word.

2. The cavil that to judge the Spirit by the Word is derogatory to the Spirit, as implying subjection on His part, is a gross misapprehension. We do not subject Him to any authority—we only represent Him as consistent with Himself. We have only a test, and a test derived from Himself, by which we can distinguish Him from every false claimant.

3. That the Word is the *dead letter* is equally frivolous. The

Word without the Spirit is dead, but with the Spirit quick and powerful. Hence Paul calls his preaching the ministration of the Spirit.

The Word is the Spirit's organ, the Spirit's instrument in conversion and teaching. The one is never without the other. The Word without the Spirit is formalism. The Spirit without the Word is enthusiasm.

CHAPTER X.

SCRIPTURE HOLDS FORTH THE TRUE GOD ALONE, AS OPPOSED TO ALL FALSE GODS.

1. THE character of God as described in Revelation exactly corresponds to His character as manifested in the works of creation and providence. It is the same God in both. We could not have discovered Him from nature, but being discovered by Revelation we can trace the same features in nature.

2. He is revealed in the Word by His names—Jehovah, Elohim—His attributes and His works.

His names are significant. His attributes articulately mentioned and illustrated by His works.

3. He is particularly distinguished from all gods. The heathen and all men under the true instincts of nature recognize one supreme God; but vanity and speculation have introduced so many errors that the true God is opposed to all their imaginations.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SETTING UP OF IDOLS A REVOLT AGAINST THE TRUE GOD.

THIS chapter is introduced here because idolatry or images are considered as a *source* of the knowledge of God.

1. The principle is laid down that the glory of God is corrupted by an impious lie wherever God is represented under any form of the imagination. Idols are specified because Scripture takes the most striking instances of a class. But the principle extends to all representations, whether externally figured or intellectually conceived.

The specifications of the second commandment are directed against prevailing forms of idolatry—Sabiism, fetichism, human shapes.

2. That this is the true meaning of the law gathered from Moses (Deut. iv. 15): "Ye heard a voice, but saw no manner of similitude." The Word and images opposed. Then from the prophets, particularly Isaiah, who shows the absurdity of idolatry (xl. 18; xli. 7. 29; xlv. 9; xlvi. 5). Then Paul in his address at Athens. (Acts xvii. 29.) This absurdity signalized by heathens themselves, by Seneca as quoted

by Augustin. This shows that idolatry was not prohibited to the Jews on account of a peculiar proneness to superstition.

3. The true explanation of the symbols of the Divine presence under the Law—the cloud, the smoke, the flame. They show God to be incomprehensible. Hence Moses could not see His face. The Dove as a symbol of the Spirit. It was vanishing. The figures over the mercy-seat, what they mean? Why the Seraphim are veiled? Further, these things belong to the pædagogy of the Law.

4. The Psalmist also exposes the folly of idolatry (cxv. 4; cxxxv. 15). He asserts first that these images are not gods, and then that every human device is vanity.

(1.) He insists upon the intrinsic improbability that these things can represent God. (2.) Upon the presumption of a feeble creature making a God. To this may be added the raillery of Horace.

The same vein is found in Isaiah xliv. 15. Again, in xl. 21, he shows that creation should have taught them better. These and other passages teach that *all will-worship is detestable.* The Psalmist denounces as no better than these idols those who worship them.

The picture as much reproved as the graven image.

5. It is a common defence that images are the books of the illiterate. So says Gregory. But the Spirit of God says: "The stock is a doctrine of vanity" (Jer. x. 8), and "the molten image a lie" (Hab. ii. 18). This is true not only of the abuse of the image, but of any use in religion, for all use is abuse.

6. This was the testimony of Lactantius, Eusebius, the Council of Eliberis, and Augustin, who quotes with approbation the sentence of the heathen Varro, that the introduction of images took away reverence and added error. Hence, no pretext for saying that images are teachers.

7. This further illustrated by the indecent and immodest nature of the images. But particularly by the fact that God has instituted another method of teaching, the preaching of the Gospel and the dispensation of sacraments.

8. The origin of idolatry traced in Wisdom to the worship of the dead. This a mistake. A short history of idolatry from the Bible. Its true origin in the desire of a present God. Its true forge the imagination.

9. The process by which they come to be adored traced. It is a natural process of association—a striking passage. Where men feign, they fix God. The plea that they do not regard the images as gods; among the heathen and among Papists.

10. That the image is treated with peculiar respect shown from facts. Why pray before it? Why prize one more than another?

11. The distinction between *Latria* and *Dulia* ridiculed.

12, 13. The true use of sculpture and painting. Two kinds of pic-

tures—individual, historical. Neither lawful in the worship of God, neither used in the first ages, and both liable to abuse.

14, 15, 16. Ridicules the Second Council of Nice.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT GOD EXISTS IN THREE PERSONS.

1. The Divine essence represented in the Scriptures as *immense* and *spiritual*. These two epithets rebuke alike the follies of the vulgar and the subtleties of the philosophers.

(1.) He is *immense*. Then he cannot be measured by *sense*.

(2.) He is *spiritual*. Then earthly and carnal thoughts are reproved. For the same reason he is said to have his dwelling in heaven—not that he does not also fill earth, but to raise our thoughts above the sensible and finite.

(3.) His immensity and unity refute the error of the Manichees, as there cannot be two infinites, nor can unity be divided.

(4.) Anthropomorphism is only a condescension to our weakness.

2. In addition to the marks of immensity and spirituality, the Scriptures distinguish the true God by another peculiarity. He is both *one* and *three*, and if we do not believe *one God* in *three Persons*, we embrace only a name without the reality. The *essence* is not threefold, but simple; it is not divided, but whole and entire in each Person. Some object to the word *person* as a human invention, but the Scriptures evidently justify the thing.

The apostle in calling the Son (Heb. i. 3) the character or express image of the Father's hypostasis attributes a subsistence to the Father different from that of the Son. This cannot mean that the Son has the essence of the Father, for as that is simple and indivisible, and numerically the same in both, its possession by one cannot be called an image of the other. The same thing is itself, and not an image of itself. There is then a distinction of subsistence. The same reasoning applies to the Holy Ghost. This distinction, called by the apostle *hypostasis*, is rendered by the Latins *Persona*; more strictly it would be *subsistentia*. Many render it *substantia*. The Greeks use the term προσωπα. The word *Person*, therefore, is not altogether an arbitrary invention.

3. Still, if it were a mere human word, its introduction is not absolutely to be condemned. If divines, in explaining and interpreting Scripture, are to use no words but those that they find in Scripture, their expositions would be mere collections of Scripture texts. The true principle which should regulate the introduction of exotic words is the edification of the Church. What explains, what neatly and precisely conveys the sense of the Holy Ghost, is admissible. What ministers to subtlety, to strife, to confusion, must be avoided. We are to

be certain that we *think* according to the Bible—that is the main point.

4. The terms which have been introduced in stating the doctrine of the Trinity have been rendered necessary by the perverseness of heretics. These terms were the only expedients by which their evasions could be detected and exposed. Arius, for example, was willing to confess that Christ was God, but still he made Him a creature, a subordinate deity. The word *consubstantial*, *homousion*, treed him. The Sabellians seemed to recognize a Trinity, but it was a Trinity of relations or attributes. The distinction of Persons exposed their error.

5. The danger is that in rejecting the words we reject the *thing*. If the *faith* could be held in sincerity and truth, we might dispense with the terms. Nor indeed were the Fathers always consistent with each other in their use of some of the terms employed to express the relations of the Divine Persons. This shown in the words *consubstantial* and *hypostasis*, which produced perplexity from confounding Person and Substance with Essence. Augustin and Hilary examples of moderation and caution in censuring the phraseology of others.

Necessity introduced the distinctions, and necessity keeps them up. We cannot state the truth in its contrasts with error without them.

6. But all disputes about words aside. Let us come to the doctrine itself.

(1.) A Person is a subsistence in the Divine essence, which, though related to others, is distinguished from them by an incommunicable property. *Subsistence* and *Essence* are not the same. If the Word were simply God, and had nothing peculiar, He could not be said to have been *with God*. When immediately after it is added, He was God, the allusion is to the essence. Here we have subsistence—*with God*, and essence—*was God*. Hence, too, we see that though the subsistence is inseparably joined to the essence, it is yet distinguished from it by a special mark.

(2.) Each subsistence is related to the others and distinguished from them. The term *God* applies equally to all, but the Persons are characterized by their peculiar properties.

(3.) This Personal property is incommunicable.

7. We advance now to an articulate proof of the Deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. *The first class of passages* are those relating to the Logos.

(1.) The Word of God, which is so conspicuous in the creation of the world, was not a momentary, transient sound, but that eternal Wisdom whence all the oracles proceeded. He was the Inspirer of prophets as well as of apostles, as Peter testifies. (1 Pet. i. 11.) Hence, as His word was the word of God, He Himself was God. This was the Word which created the worlds.

(2.) To the objection that the Word in Genesis is a mere command, we oppose the testimony of the Scriptures that the worlds were created by the eternal Word (Heb. i. 2; Prov. viii. 22; John i.), and His own testimony that He and His Father had worked from the beginning.

8. To the cavil that the Word only began to exist when God spake at the creation, we reply that no change can take place in the nature of God. Nothing new can begin to exist in Him. The Word was then manifested, but did not then, like a creature, receive its being. Hence, he pre-existed, according to His prayer. (John xvii. 5.)

9. *The second class of passages* are those in which He is expressly called God in the Old Testament (Ps. xlv. 6): "Thy throne, O God," etc. Calvin refutes the evasive interpretations of Arians and Socinians.

(1.) God in the sense that Moses was a god to Pharaoh. Answer: The term always qualified when used in a relative sense. Both terms of the relation must be given.

(2.) God is thy throne. Harsh and unnatural. (3.) Nor thy throne is of God.

Besides, He is called the mighty God in Isaiah. This passage also vindicated.

10. *Third class of passages.* The same thing proved from the angel of the covenant in the Old Testament. That angel was God, and yet distinct from God. The passages referred to are—Judges xiii. 16, et seq., about Manoah; the angel that wrestled with Jacob, explained by Hosea to be the Lord God of Hosts. (Hos. xii. 5.) So also in Zechariah there are two angels, one of whom sends the other, and the first called Lord of Hosts. (Zech. i. 9.) Malachi's messenger of the covenant. (Mal. iii. 1.)

11. We come now to the proofs from the New Testament.

First, the passages in which things ascribed to Jehovah in the Old are ascribed to Christ in the New. For example, Jehovah a stone of stumbling, etc. (Isa. viii. 14), is in Rom. ix. 33 applied to Christ. Isa. xlv. 23: "Every knee," etc., is applied to Christ. The Ascension (see Ps. lxviii.) also applied to Christ. The glory which Isaiah saw (vi. 1) applied to Christ in John xii. 41. In Hebrews Christ treated as the Jehovah of the Old Testament. The true God and eternal life. Form of God, etc.

12. We come now to His works—Creation, Providence, Judgment, are all ascribed to Him. He works as ceaselessly as the Father, which the Jews understood as an assertion of Divinity. He pardons sin.

13. His miracles are a conspicuous proof, since He wrought them by His own power, and not in the name of another, as the apostles

did. The whole work of salvation ascribed to Him. He is to be trusted, adored, worshipped—to be our all.

14. We come now to the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

(1.) His first appearance is when God breathed upon the formless mass at creation. (2.) The Lord God and His Spirit has sent me. (Isa. xlviii. 16.) (3.) He is the all-diffused principle of life, and therefore omnipresent. (4.) The Author of the new life. Regeneration. (5.) Attributes and works of God ascribed to Him. He *knows* God, searches His deep things. He is the Author of every grace and the Dispenser of every gift to the Church, and that according to His will.

15. The Scriptures do not scruple to call Him God. We are the temple of God as we are His temple. Ananias lied to God. What Isaiah says Jehovah spake, that Paul says the Spirit spoke (Acts xxviii. 25, 26). He is the Author of inspiration. He can be sinned against. The unpardonable sin is against Him.

16. Baptism the sacrament of faith. We are baptized into the Trinity. Hence three Persons.

17. Yet there is a certain distinction between the Three. It should be reverently approached. We should never so think of the Three as to lose sight of the One, nor of the One as to lose sight of the Three.

Again, it is *distinction*, but not division. They are inseparable.

We have already quoted passages which prove a distinction, as in John about the Logos, and when Christ speaks of a glory which He had with the Father. Also the Son represents the Father and Himself as two *witnesses*. (John v. 32.) Then again the incarnation and life of Christ on the earth prove a distinction. The Holy Ghost distinct, because He proceeds from both, and Christ speaks of Him as another Comforter.

18. Earthly analogies not suited to express the distinctions, though the Fathers used them. Calvin calls the Father the *principium, fons;* the Son, *sapientia, consilium;* the Spirit, *virtus, efficacia*—understanding, thought, will.

Then again the distinction is indicated in the order of subsistence. The Father is *first*, the Son *second*, the Holy Spirit *third*, though equally eternal. The Father is of none, the Son of the Father, the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

19. The distinction, so far from contradicting the Unity, proves it. By it we escape *Tritheism*. The Father and Son are the same, because they have the same Spirit. The whole Father is in the Son, the whole Son is in the Father. Hence, we can explain the apparent contradictions of the Fathers about the self-subsistence of the Son.

20. A recapitulation of the doctrine, and an explanation of the meaning of the term God absolutely employed.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRUE GOD DISTINGUISHED FROM FALSE GODS BY HIS WORKS OF CREATION.

HAVING considered what God is, Calvin now proceeds to His works, and in this chapter begins the discussion of Creation.

1. The importance of the doctrine of creation consists in two things—in explaining the real distinction between God and the universe, and in preventing idolatry. Creation is the badge, the mark of the true Jehovah. Hence God has given a *history* of the creation by virtue of which the mind can rest in certified fact, and not lose itself in fables.

The time of the creation is noted. It is a profane and absurd cavil that God did not begin creation sooner. The reply of the old man in Augustin to the question, What was God doing before He created the world?

2. The creation was a gradual, not an instantaneous work. This was in accommodation to the nature of man. He thinks in time, and the law of time was observed in providing for him the materials of thought. One day specially set apart for devout contemplation. In this order God's goodness to man is conspicuous, as he was not created until ample provisions had been made for his comfort.

3. Postponing the consideration of Man to the next chapter, Calvin devotes this chapter mainly to the Angels, good and bad. The importance of the doctrine concerning angels is in rebuking idolatry. It refutes Manichæism. No spirit was originally evil. Evil is a corruption of the good.

4. The time and order of the creation of angels not made known, and therefore frivolous to inquire into it. Such questions as those discussed by Dionysius altogether impertinent. God reveals only what edifies.

5. Angels are creatures of God, and are employed as messengers to execute His will. Hence the name. They are also called *Hosts*, as an army surrounding the throne of God. They are called *Dominions, Principalities, Powers*. They are also called *Thrones*, but the reason obscure. They are called *Gods*.

6. The most important thing for us is that angels are the ministers of God's beneficence to man. They watch for our safety, defend us from danger, direct our path, and take heed that no evil befalls us. They ministered to Christ before us.

7. We are not warranted to say that each believer has a Guardian angel. The arguments in favour are—that each kingdom seems to be under an angel; the passage about the little ones, whose angels behold the face of their Father in heaven; and the case of Peter, whose angel

was supposed to be at the gate. But the Scriptures do teach that we are under the care of *all* the angels.

8. The number, order and ranks of angels not defined. Their number great. One archangel mentioned, but their relative positions unknown.

9. This section proves them to be real, substantive, personal beings, and not mere influences.

10. Angel-worship shown to be idolatrous. God the real Author of every good. Angelic relation is ministerial.

11. He uses angels, and reveals the fact as a prop to the weakness of our faith. It aids our faith to show us the means by which a thing is to be done.

12. The general doctrine concerning angels should be used to invigorate our confidence in God. We should feel that He has ample resources for executing all His will. Particularly should we ascend beyond angels to God.

13. The scope of what the Scriptures teach in relation to the Devil is to guard us against his wiles and machinations. He is called the ruler of the darkness of this world, the strong man armed, the roaring lion—all to put us on our guard. Hence Peter exhorts to *resist him.*

14. To make the necessity of caution more apparent, these evil spirits are represented as very many, and as leagued under *one* principal leader.

15. What should equally stimulate is, that the Devil is both our adversary and the adversary of God. He was the seducer of our first parents, a liar and a murderer from the beginning, a blasphemer.

16. The Devil is wicked, not by creation, but by depravation. He had a trial and a fall, but the details the Scriptures have not revealed. We know enough to put us on our guard.

17. The Devil is absolutely subject to the power of God, and can do nothing without His permission and consent.

18. God permits the Devil to try true believers by manifold temptations, but he can never finally triumph over them. The wicked he rules.

19. Devils are personal beings, and not mere evil suggestions.

20. The delight with which we should contemplate the works of God; the creation a scene of beauty and of grandeur. It is a noble spectacle to sanctified taste.

21. The universe is the first school of Theology. There we should study and adore the perfections of God.

22. God's goodness to man, as exemplified in creation, should especially animate us to confidence in His fatherly goodness.

CHAPTER XV.

MAN AS HE WAS CREATED GOD'S NOBLEST TERRESTRIAL WORK.

1. HAVING considered angels, Calvin comes now to the consideration of man, and that because he is the noblest specimen of God's terrestrial works. The account of his twofold state is requisite to a proper knowledge of him. His primitive condition should be understood for two reasons—(1.) as showing his normal condition, and thus measuring his fall; and (2.) as vindicating God for his present ruin.

The first thing to be noticed is, that his body was made out of dust—a lesson of humility.

2. But man is evidently a compound being. He has a soul as well as a body. The soul is an immortal essence. It is also called *spirit.* The two words synonymous, except when used together. The soul is not a mere influence, or breath, or result of organization. It is an immortal substance. Proved—(1.) from conscience; (2.) from its capacity of knowing God; (3.) from the vigour and activity of its powers and their independence of the body, as shown (4.) in the fancies of sleep. (5.) Scripture asserts it as teaching that we dwell in houses of clay; distinguishing us from our bodies; that we put off corruption; filthiness of the flesh and spirit; Christ bishop of souls; pastors watch for souls; Paul calls God to witness upon his *soul;* Dives and Lazarus.

3. The strong proof of the dignity of the soul is that man was made in the image of God. This is seated primarily in the soul. This image *reflected* in the body and the erect stature, but not *seated* there. Osiander places the image in the whole man, the body being a proleptic resemblance of the body Christ was to wear. According to him Christ would have been incarnate independently of sin. This doctrine makes Christ the image of the Spirit and destroys the distinction betwixt them. It makes Christ the image of Himself.

Image and likeness are synonymous. Osiander's objection that the *whole* man is said to be the image, frivolous.

4. But to understand particularly what this image is, we must study it in the regeneration and sanctification of man. The original image is that to which we are restored.

The particulars of this image are knowledge, righteousness, holiness. Hence, at first, there was light of intellect, rectitude of heart and universal soundness. Its restoration is only partial now, perfect hereafter. Paul makes man the image of God to the exclusion of woman; easily answered—a political difference.

5. The Manichæan doctrine that the soul is an emanation from God, revived by Servetus, is now refuted. That would be to attribute to God the imperfections of man. So also Osiander's notion of the im-

age, as implying our participation in the essential righteousness of God, falls to the ground.

6. The philosophers have not been able to define the soul; none but Plato admitting its immortality. He made it the image of God. Others confined it to the body. Now the body is its instrument, but not necessary to its being or operation. It should govern the body, and that in reference to religion as well as the present life. Our true end is religion, and even our vices proclaim our immortality. Our whole nature is constituted with a reference to religion. The doctrine of several souls refuted.

(1.) The first division of the faculties noticed is—(*a.*) Five senses, terminating in a common sense; (*b.*) Imagination; (*c.*) Reason; (*d.*) Intellect. To Intellect, Fancy and Reason, three cognitive faculties, correspond three appetitive, Will, Irascibility and Concupiscence—their objects being the good (will), the beautiful (irascibility), the sensual (concupiscence.)

(2.) The second division is into Intellect and Will.

(3.) Sense, Intellect, Will.

(4.) Intellect, Appetite, both double. Intellect contemplative and practical. Appetite contains will and passion.

7. Philosophy defective from its ignorance of the fall, especially in relation to will.

Calvin's division into intellect and will. The one guides, the other obeys. Under intellect he includes all the higher energies of our nature; under will, all the active and emotive. Before the fall man's will was *free*.

(The best division is into cognitive, conative, emotive.)

8. The order and subordination of the faculties in an upright being. Particularly the normal condition of the will.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOD'S WORK OF PROVIDENCE.

1. God's interest in His works was not at all absolved by the original act of creation. His presence is ever with it, and determines all its conditions. The creation is hardly intelligible without Providence. The carnal mind stops at creation, and the energies then infused or the impetus then given. God made the world and set it agoing, but it continues to move of itself. But faith makes Him the Governor, the Ruler, the Disposer, as well as the Creator. He sustains, cherishes and cares for everything which He has made, even to the minutest sparrow. This is the view of Providence signalized in the Psalms (Ps. xxxiii. 6–13; Ps. civ. 27–30; Acts xvii. 28: "In Him we live," etc.).

2. The scheme opposed to the true doctrine of Providence is that of Fortune and Fortuitous Causes. A man falling among robbers or ravenous beasts, a gust of wind at sea causing shipwreck, the being struck down by the fall of a house or a tree, etc.—these and such like are ascribed to chance.

The Scripture teaches that these and all other events are positive determinations of the Divine will.

Inanimate objects are His instruments to execute His purposes. The sun a conspicuous example, but that the sun only obeys a superior will is evident—(1.) from the fact that light and heat did not originally belong to it; (2.) that God made it stand still at the command of Joshua, and go back upon the dial of Ahaz. So the seasons are appointments of will, and not a mere matter of course. Evident from the changes in them.

3. God's omnipotence is not an otiose omnipotence, but efficacious, energetic, ever active, not directed to the general, but to the special, He is omnipotent as *doing* His pleasure. There is a twofold benefit resulting from this view of Divine Providence—

(1.) Sense of security under His protection.

(2.) Freedom from superstitious fears.

No other view of Providence affords any real solace to the child of God.

4. Providence, therefore, implies a real agency of God. It extends to the hand and the eye; it is *action*, not bare prescience. The notion of confused and general providence inconsistent with this action of God, and leaves the creature under God's *power*, but not His decree. The Epicurean doctrine still worse. There is no real Providence without giving to God the disposal and direction of all things. That is the vital point. His will must rule and determine each event.

5. This is the only view which affords scope for the paternal favour or for the judgments of God. If events have not proceeded from will, they cannot express His feelings toward us.

6. Man is the special subject of Providence. Man is now under the absolute disposal of God. (Jer. x. 23; Prov. xx. 24.) Man's willing, choosing, acting, all ordered. (Prov. xvi. 1.)

The events which befall him, however fortuitous they seem, are ordered. If struck by a branch from a tree, it is from the Lord. (Ex. xxi. 13.) The lot at God's disposal. (Prov. xvi. 33.) So the condition of men as rich and poor, etc., all ordered. (Prov. xxix. 13; Ps. lxxv. 6–7.)

7. Particular events ascribed to special Providence. The south wind supplied the people in the wilderness with quails, but winds are always the messengers of God. The storm and the calm at sea He makes. (Ps. cvii. 25–29.) Offspring are His gift. (Gen. xxx. 2.)

Our daily bread a signal proof of special Providence. He makes the earth fruitful or barren.

8. The doctrine of Providence is not the Stoic doctrine of Fate. That was a blind necessity; this the determination of an intelligent will. But it does follow that there is no such thing properly as chance. All things are necessary in the sense of *certain* with reference to God. Basil and Augustin against chance quoted.

9. Relatively to us there is chance—that is, events are uncertain, and causes unknown. The twofold necessity of the schools, *secundum quid* and absolute, also *consequentiæ* and consequent.

CHAPTER XVII.

USE OF THE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

1. The design of the doctrine of Providence is not to minister to the subtleties of vain speculation, but to promote edification. Four things to be considered—(1.) Providence extends equally to the past and the future. It is a scheme. (2.) It works by, without, or against means. (3.) Its object is man generally, but the Church most specially. Adversity is for reproof, for chastisement, for prevention of sin, for humility, or to punish the wicked. There is always an end. (4.) The design often concealed, but we are not to condemn. What we know is enough to repress any rash judgments. God is always wise and good.

2. The study of Providence should be approached with reverence and humility. It is not a point to be profanely handled. Many object to the doctrine altogether as dangerous. But it is enough that the Scripture has revealed it, and requires us to adore the depths of God's counsel. (Ps. xxxvi. 7; Rom. xi. 33, 34.) Moses particularly illustrates God's unsearchable wisdom in governing the world. Secret things, etc. (Deut. xxix. 29.) God's will is an immutable law, but it is not an arbitrary law.

3. The true doctrine of Providence does not authorize the perverse inferences which the ungodly deduce from it: (1.) God to blame for our sins; (2.) vain to use means; (3.) useless to discharge duty.

4. Providence and human deliberation are compatible, as both are affirmed in Scripture. (Prov. xvi. 9.) The decree connects together means and end, antecedent and consequent, the conditions and the result.

5. Providence no excuse for crime—(1.) Wicked men do not obey God's will, which commands; (2.) conscience condemns them; (3.) God uses men without being a party to their crimes. The sun rouses the odour from the dung-hill, but is not itself defiled.

6. Calvin gives now a holy meditation on Providence, showing the

use of the doctrine—(1.) every event ordered; (2.) all for the good of the godly; (3.) all agents in God's hand; (4.) has a special care for His people. Scripture proofs.

7. Meditation continued. God has complete control of all enemies, Satan and wicked men.

8. The Christian view of injuries and of afflictions as from the hand of God.

9. Providence does not absolve us from gratitude to friends, nor from the use of means, nor encourage sin. Christian view of Providence in these respects.

10. The happiness of a pious mind beautifully illustrated.

11. Its tranquillity in trouble illustrated.

12 and 13. Repentance in God.

14. Change of His decrees.

BOOK SECOND.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE REDEEMER IN CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THROUGH THE FALL OF ADAM THE WHOLE RACE ACCURSED AND DEGENERATE—OF ORIGINAL SIN.

1. The importance of self-knowledge exemplified in the proverb, It is shameful not to know ourselves. The mistake of philosophers in relation to this knowledge; they made it the minister of pride and vanity. Its true nature consists in the consideration of what we were, what we might have been, and the precariousness of our gifts, which will inspire gratitude and a sense of dependence; then in a consideration of what we *are* since the fall, to inspire humility and shame. The first consideration leads us to a perception of the true end of our existence. The second, to a sense of impotency in achieving it.

2. Hence, the truth of God requires as the *end of self-knowledge* a conviction of helplessness, a renunciation of all confidence in ourselves. This, however, is contrary to the natural suggestions of the human mind. Self-love prompts us to find every excellence in ourselves. Man thinks himself endowed with every requisite to secure the end of his being. Hence, discourses on the dignity of human nature are soothing to his pride.

3. Hence, while philosophers and the Bible commend self-knowledge as a principal branch of wisdom, they differ widely as to its nature and end. One tends to self-sufficiency and independence, the other to humility and self-despair. But the Scriptures do not repress a

knowledge or contemplation of man's primitive gifts. His original excellence measures his present ruin. So also a sense of the intrinsic dignity of his faculties teaches him to seek a better and higher end than the flesh can reach. Self-knowledge, therefore, involves two things: (1.) The end of his being considered as endowed with such excellent gifts. (2.) A sense of inability to attain the end suited to his faculties. The first consideration is the measure of duty, the other of our weakness. The latter, or man's state by the fall, is considered first.

4. The sin by which Adam fell is shown from its punishment to have been fearfully great. It was not inordinate appetite. Calvin makes it to be essentially *unbelief*, whence sprang ambition, pride and ingratitude. By unbelief he *fell* away *from God;* this was the secret of his sin.

5. This defection produced spiritual *death* in him. This death he transmits to his posterity, as indeed the effects of his fall are conspicuous throughout the creation. If the lower animals have been affected by his sin, it is not wonderful that his children should be. Hereditary corruption was what the fathers called *original sin*, meaning by sin the depravation of a nature originally pure. Pelagians denied native depravity, and said that sin was propagated by imitation. Augustin showed that it came from Adam and was propagated by birth. (Rom. v. 12.) David confesses it (Ps. li. 7), and Job explains the naturalness of it. (xiv. 4.)

6. The ground of the transmission of a corrupt nature is our relation to Adam as the *root* of mankind. This appears from the comparison betwixt him and Christ. (Rom. v. 12.) Righteousness is not communicated to us by imitation. Christ is not a mere example. But Paul makes *life* and *death* depend upon the same principle. Here Calvin has in view regeneration, and not justification. We are renewed or receive from Christ a holy nature on the same principle that we receive from Adam an unholy nature. The same thing asserted 1 Cor. xv. 22. By nature children of wrath. (Eph. ii. 3.) Whatsoever is born of flesh, etc. (John iii. 6.) The principle of imputation, though implied in this section, is not explicitly stated. Calvin makes a distinction betwixt Adam as a *progenitor* and Adam as a *root*, but does not define the difference.

7. This section considers more articulately the ground of propagation. The notion seems to be that Adam was not only *a man*, but *human nature*. What he had was for the race as well as himself; what he lost was for the race as well as himself. Human nature, therefore, became corrupt in him, and passes down as he tainted it. The question, how souls are propagated, is frivolous, as corruption is not in the essence or substance of the soul, but is superinduced by

the appointment which determined its state in Adam. The Pelagian objection that saints beget sinners he answers by asserting that they beget according to *nature* and not *grace*. The principle of federal representation is not seized as it should be. A mystic Realism is made to take the place of it.

8. This section articulately defines original sin, a hereditary pravity and corruption of our nature, diffused through all the parts of the soul, rendering us obnoxious to the Divine wrath, and producing in us those works which the Scripture calls works of the flesh. (1.) It is sin because Paul so styles it, and particularly the fruits of it. (2.) Because it is the ground of *condemnation;* it makes the infant guilty in the sight of God; it is odious to Him. Calvin here evidently teaches that corruption in the order of nature precedes guilt. (3.) This depravity is ever operative; it produces ceaseless fruits of sin—not a *bare privation*—not concupiscence, except as that extends to the whole soul.

9. This section shows that depravity affects the *whole* man, and not the sensual appetites *alone*. In all the parts and faculties its pervading influence is felt.

10. This section attributes our ruin only to ourselves. God is not to blame. He made us upright, but we have corrupted ourselves. The objection that He might have prevented the fall we have no right to put. It belongs to a mystery which we cannot penetrate.

11. This section shows the ambiguity of the word *nature*. We are not corrupt by *nature* in the sense that the substance of our faculties is vitiated or that sin is an original endowment. It is altogether adventitious and accidental. Sin is natural in the sense that it is not an acquired habit, but from birth.

Notes.

1. Calvin confines the terms *original sin* to the depravity which is inherent in us, and does not include the guilt of Adam's first sin.

2. These words are sometimes, however, taken in a wider sense to include both—(1.) as including the guilt of Adam's sin it is called *originale originans* or *originale imputatum;* (2.) as embracing native depravity, *originale originatum* or *inhærens*.

3. Augustin introduces the phrase to indicate—(1.) that it springs from the origin of the race, from our first parents; (2.) that it begins in us with our own being, it attaches to us at our origin; (3.) it is the origin of all other sins.

4. In common and popular usage the phrase is used in the sense of Calvin. Our Shorter Catechism seems to include both.

CHAPTER II.

MAN NOW DESPOILED OF FREEDOM OF WILL AND MISERABLY ENSLAVED.

1. The design of this chapter is to vindicate the doctrine of *total* depravity. We have already seen that the race and every individual of it are corrupt. The question arises as to *the extent* of this corruption in each soul. Calvin makes it *total*—that is, it extends to all the parts of the soul, and involves the complete extinction of spiritual life. These are the two ideas involved in total depravity. He states it as the entire want of *liberty*. Before vindicating the doctrine he shows that the method of discussion must equally avoid the extremes of encouraging either *sloth* or *presumption* in man. It should be so presented as to make him feel that his strength is in God, and to seek for it there. He compares human strength to a reed—rather to smoke.

2. The human soul is divided into mind and heart. The mind possesses *reason*, which enlightens and directs. The heart involves appetite, which lies between reason and sense. When appetite follows reason it becomes *will;* when it follows sense it becomes *lust*. Now the will is in a condition to obey either, and this is its freedom. Reason places before it good, sense evil, and it can choose either, and according to its choice form character. This is the moral philosophy of the philosophers.

3. The philosophers have admitted the difficulty of yielding to reason under the influence of temptations from the solicitations of external objects and the influence of the passions, and have well described the bondage which indulgence brings upon us. They compare our passions and lusts to wild horses which it is extremely difficult to tame. But still they maintain that virtue and vice are absolutely in our power. The Stoics went so far as to affirm that a man's virtue so completely depended upon himself that it was not a subject of gratitude to the gods.

4. The early Christian writers, of whom Chrysostom and Jerome are given as examples, acknowledged the influence of depravity upon the whole man, yet conceded entirely too much to the philosophers. They wished to avoid the imputation of absurdity, and especially to avoid encouraging human torpor and indolence. Later writers went so far as to represent depravity as confined to the sensual appetites, while reason was untouched and the will still capable of obeying it. The Schoolmen generally adopted the sentiment of Augustin that man was corrupted in his natural endowments and the supernatural taken away. But they misapprehended the precise import of the doctrine, and modified it almost away by their distinctions. The power which man has in relation to virtue the Latins call *free will*. The Greeks applied an epithet to the will, *self-power*, which seemed to make it entirely sov-

ereign. Calvin proposes to examine first the meaning of the term, and then to investigate the Scripture doctrine concerning man's power. Origen places free will in reason and choice. Augustin substantially agrees with him who defines it as a power of reason and will by which God is chosen when grace assists; evil, when grace is wanting. Aquinas makes it an elective power—that is, a power of intelligent choice. All agree that it pertains both to reason and to will. The question arises, how much they attributed to both.

5. In common and external things, those not involving the kingdom of God, they ascribed to man full freedom—righteousness and true holiness to grace. Hence, some made a distinction of the will into the sensitive, animal, and spiritual. The two former we possess by nature; the latter is the gift of the Spirit. A common distinction of freedom was into freedom from necessity, freedom from sin, freedom from misery. The first was natural, the two others we lost by the fall. This distinction Calvin accepts, substituting coaction for necessity.

6. It is clear from this distinction that man needs grace in order to good works, and that special grace. But it does not appear that he is wholly devoid of power. Lombard distinguishes between operative and co-operative grace. Operative, as effectual in producing a good will; co-operative concurs in producing obedience. Calvin objects to the distinction—(1.) as implying that we are self-impelled to seek a good will; (2.) that we accept or reject grace when given. This last doctrine has been articulately announced as necessary to explain human merit. But the result of Lombard's discussion is to place freedom in mere exemption from constraint. Man sins freely because he sins voluntarily.

7. Calvin objects decidedly to calling the voluntary indulgence of sin by the name of freedom if man cannot choose the opposite. The term misleads in spite of all our explanations.

8. This section shows that Augustin clearly taught the *bondage* of the will—that it was free from righteousness. As ambiguous and abusive the term ought not to be used. The word *will* expresses all they mean by freedom from restraint; the epithet *free* is either tautological or teaches an error.

9. This section shows that vacillating as the other fathers were, except Augustin, they yet in various places teach the very same doctrine which he did of man's absolute dependence on grace. Grace is compared to the tree of life, free will to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10. True self-knowledge is the sense of entire helplessness in ourselves, and of dependence upon God. This dependence upon God is our strength. It is not a property absolute in man, but as he is in God.

11. Hence humility is the foundation of our philosophy—the first,

second and third thing in religion. This humility explained by various passages from Augustin. It is self-emptiness to be filled with God.

12. Calvin proceeds to an articulate statement of his views as to the extent of the injury done to us by the fall. He accepts the announcement of Augustin that *our natural talents have been corrupted, our supernatural lost.* By the supernatural are meant faith, holiness and whatever pertains to the kingdom of God. It is the same as the spiritual—whatever pertains to that knowledge and love of God which constitute true religion. Whatever is restored in regeneration was lost by the fall. Still, the faculty of reason remains. Yet in relation to secular things it is debilitated and vitiated. As a faculty of truth, if it were in a sound state, we should be protected from error. Error is, therefore, a proof of disease. Then, we mistake the true method of philosophy, and blunder as to the value of the objects of knowledge. 13. To present the matter more distinctly, we consider—(1.) the understanding in relation to terrestrial things, and then (2.) in relation to celestial. In the first class are embraced civil polity, domestic economy and the arts and sciences. Calvin shows that there are principles of reason which are regulative, and therefore are so much light in relation to these interests. There is the idea of justice on which the state is founded. This is universal—the very controversies about the best form of polity prove it.

14. The arts, liberal and manual.

For these man has capacity and aptitude. Though variously distributed, the talents here yet really exist, and great results have been achieved. These talents evince beyond a doubt man's rational and intelligent nature.

15. The sciences require a still higher order of intelligence, and these have been admirably cultivated among the heathen. Logic, Rhetoric, Poetry, Geometry, Medicine may be taken as examples.

16. Calvin shows that these attainments of reason are really the gifts of the Spirit. They are the results of that vitalizing energy without which a plant cannot grow. They are dispensed in goodness, variously distributed so as to promote the interests of society, and special talents are imparted to men for special services.

17. These considerations show that reason is not extinguished. There is a sphere in which it still operates, though diseased. It is God's goodness that has saved it from idiocy even here. Man is therefore shown to be rational and intelligent.

18. When we come to spiritual matters reason is stark blind.

These consist in three things—(1.) the knowledge of God; (2.) of His paternal favour; (3.) of the rule of life. In relation to the first, the heathen philosophers had occasional glimpses, which, like flashes

of lightning, only made the darkness more intense. The world by wisdom knew not God.

19. The blindness of reason on these points Calvin establishes by Scripture-proofs rather than by argument. He quotes John i. 4, our being called "darkness;" and Matt. xvi. 17.

20. He notices particularly the Scripture account of regeneration in which illumination figures so conspicuously. The whole doctrine goes on the supposition that the natural man is unable to discern the things of the Spirit.

21. The same line of argument is pursued in this section.

22. The next point is to inquire into our ability to discover the rule of life. Here we have some knowledge. Conscience is a law, but it rather serves to take away excuse than to inform the virtue.

23. Themistius has attributed to men the universal knowledge of the general definition—that is, of the fundamental principles of right. But their debility appears in applying the rule to concrete cases. Here we are liable to grievous mistakes. We are further liable to a species of sophistry which blinds the mind for the moment, but which is immediately dissipated when the crime has been perpetrated.

24. But take our best moral judgments and bring them to the standard of the Divine law, and they are grievously defective. Our best morality falls short of holiness. The principle of obedience never rises higher than the authority of law; it never grasps the love of holiness; then, it is confined too much to the letter, and there is often positive error.

While, therefore, we know something of the law materially considered, in relation to true holiness we are as blind as bats.

25. Hence the conclusion beautifully carried out in this section is that in these matters reason is a blind guide.

26. Let us look now at the state of the case in relation to the will. Here the blind impulse which prompts us to desire good is not to be confounded with will. Mere natural inclination is not will. That implies intelligence, discrimination, choice. If, then, the understanding which is to present the grounds of choice be dark, the will has nothing spiritual before it, and therefore cannot choose.

27. Our inability to will or even to desire a good will proved from Scripture.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE CORRUPT NATURE PROCEEDS NOTHING BUT WHAT IS DAMNABLE.

1. We have seen that total depravity includes two ideas: *First*, that it pervades the *whole* man; *second*, that it totally precludes all

good. The first point was discussed in the preceding chapter. The second is fully exhibited in this. The proposition is that man is wholly destitute of anything that is spiritually good.

(1.) Proved first from the Saviour's declaration that he is flesh—that whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh. What *flesh* means proved by Paul, "to be carnally-minded is death, the carnal mind," etc.

(2.) The objection that *flesh* means the sensual part of our nature refuted by the doctrine of the new birth, which does not refer to the body, and by the articulate statement that we must be renewed in the *spirit* of the *mind*. The description of a Gentile state (Eph. iv. 17, 18) is applicable to all. Christ hence said to be light.

(3.) The vanity of man the burden of many parts of Scripture.

2. The total destitution of all spiritual good further evinced by Jeremiah xvii. 9, "The heart deceitful," etc., and by Romans iii. 10–18, which Calvin fully expounds. Such is the clear testimony of Scripture.

3. A difficulty arises in relation to the virtues of the heathen and of many natural men whose lives are examples of virtue. Calvin attributes these virtues to *restraining grace*, and draws the distinction betwixt it and purifying grace. The elements of this restraint are often shame and pride.

4. But the question arises, Is Camillus no better than Catiline?

(1.) If the question be, Has Camillus any more holiness than Catiline? the answer is, Both are equally destitute. The heart in both is radically the same.

(2.) If the question be, Has Camillus as much sin? the answer is in the negative. One is more corrupt than the other, and the virtues of Camillus are gifts of God, produced by restraining and not sanctifying grace.

5. Such being the state of man, his will is under a necessity of sin. This is its miserable bondage. Necessity is not force, and is not inconsistent with the nature of will. A necessity of holiness is the consummation of freedom. Sin is none the less voluntary because there is no alternative. Confirmed by divers passages from Augustin.

6. This miserable condition of man evinced by the nature of the remedy provided by grace. This will illustrate our need.

(1.) God *begins* the work. (Phil. i. 6.)

(2.) The nature of His work includes complete renovation of heart—new heart, new spirit, etc.

(3.) God carries on the work.

7. The notion of co-operating grace as understood by the Schoolmen is refuted, and Augustin shown to be misunderstood.

8. Efficacious grace now more articulately proved from Scripture and from the testimony of Augustin.

(1.) Grace begins in election, but that precludes any good in man.

(2.) Good begins in *faith*, but faith is the gift of God.

9. The prayers of the saints tend to the same point. The same proved by Christ's relation to His people as their Life, Branch and Vine. He works in us both to will and to do.

10. His influence on the will is efficacious; it does not simply submit to us an alternative. Good will is not offered, but given. They who hear come.

11. Perseverance is equally the result of grace. It is not a reward to the improvement of grace. It is not a legal blessing, but a gracious privilege. The true nature of the rewards of grace.

12. The objection that Paul represents himself as a co-worker with God answered, Paul affirms just the opposite.

13 and 14. Explain the doctrine of Augustin.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW GOD OPERATES IN THE HEART OF MAN.

1. We have seen that man is so perfectly the captive of sin that he is incapable of desiring that which is good. We have also seen the distinction betwixt coaction and necessity, so that while he sins necessarily he sins also voluntarily. Devoted as he is to the service of Satan, the question arises as to the nature of Satan's agency in his sinful actions, and then a further question as to the nature of God's agency in the same actions.

Augustin compares the will to a horse, and God and the Devil to riders. The will of a natural man is not forced by Satan. There is no reluctant obedience. It is fascinated by his fallacies. He works through deceptions. His agency is described as *a blinding* of their minds. He works therefore by deceit, they being willing dupes. The foundation of his power is in the perverseness of their wills.

2. The agency of God in wicked actions is very different. To have a clear view of it, take the case of Job. He was spoiled by the Chaldeans. Now, here there were three agents—the Devil, Man and God. The Devil prompted the act, the Chaldeans performed it, and yet God was concerned in it, as Job says that the Lord had taken away his goods. Now, how can we attribute any agency to God without excusing Man and the Devil, or making God the author of sin? The answer is, that the agency of each is different, having a different end and exercised in a different manner. In the case before us God's purpose is a trial of faith and patience; the Devil's purpose is to produce apostasy by driving a good man to despair; the purpose of the Chaldeans was plunder. The mode of acting is equally different. God permits Satan to afflict, Satan instigates the wickedness of the Chaldeans,

and they indulge their lusts. Satan is God's instrument to execute His purposes. While acting from his own malice he yet fulfils the purposes of Providence. We do not speak of the general influence by which God sustains him and keeps him and his energies in being, but of the special influence which appears in each particular act. The same action may be therefore ascribed to the three, but so differently as to end and manner that the moral significancy is by no means the same.

3. The Fathers were timid in ascribing any agency to God in wicked actions, lest they should give a handle to profaneness. Even Augustin expressed himself fearfully when he made the blinding of the wicked the work of Satan, and only a prescience or permission on the part of God. But the Scriptures go further than this and make God's operation twofold:

(1.) Negative, withholding his Spirit, and therefore depriving them of the light.

(2.) Positive, in determining the particular acts which they should commit. They did not order their own way. He uses Satan in these cases as his instrument.

4. The first mode of operation is proved by sundry passages of Scripture. (Job xii. 20–24; Isa. lxiii. 17.)

The second mode proved by the case of Pharaoh, in which there was more than a negative influence, and particularly by the fact that in the judgments which God inflicted upon His people through the instrumentality of wicked nations and rulers, he speaks of them as His tools. They are His sword, ministers of His will. He calls them, hisses for them, etc., etc. Sennacherib was His axe. Augustin properly remarked: *Quod ipsi peccant, eorum esse, quod peccando hoc vel illud agant, ex virtute Dei esse, tenebras prout visum est dividentis.*

5. The agency of Satan as permitted by God illustrated in the case of Saul, who was subject to the incursions of an evil spirit from the Lord. This expresses the whole doctrine. The actual agency of such spirits and their accomplishing the purposes of God. They act out their wickedness, and He turns it to the ends of His own righteousness and glory.

6. The next point is the freedom of the will in matters indifferent. Here some have conceded the matter, rather to avoid disputes than from the force of truth.

The providence of God here also controls and directs, and it is important to know it, that we may recognize our obligation to His goodness. He suggests thoughts and purposes and resolutions, and gives them success. Illustrated by several examples.

7. The objection that the cases mentioned were peculiar and special answered by showing that the wills of men are comprehended within

the wheels of Providence, and that God turns them according to His own pleasure. The fluctuations of our minds, sometimes feeble and irresolute and then heroic and resolved, a proof of this. The Scriptures articulately teach it. Even the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord.

8. The real question concerning the will is not man's ability to execute his wishes. There he is confessedly restrained. But concerning the ability to will oppositely as an internal phenomenon from what he does will.

CHAPTER V.

REFUTATION OF OBJECTIONS TO THE SLAVERY OF THE WILL.

1. This chapter considers the objections usually alleged against the doctrine already established, and undertakes through them to prove the slavery of the will.

The objections are of two sorts—1, those derived from principles of reason or common sense; 2, those derived from Scripture.

The first of the first kind is that necessity destroys the nature of sin; its very essence is to be voluntary or avoidable. Calvin shows that sin is not from creation but corruption, that we are really guilty of Adam's first sin, and that therefore we came voluntarily into our present state. Again, necessity does not destroy the moral significancy of acts, as seen in the holiness of God and the wickedness of devils. The more necessary, the more intense is the moral quality.

2. The next is that without freedom of choice man would neither be punishable nor rewardable. This argument, derived from Aristotle, was employed by Chrysostom and Jerome. The answer is that sin is *voluntary* and therefore punishable; it is from the man himself. As to rewards, we discard all merit but that which consists in the grace of God, and in this we follow the Scriptures.

3. Thirdly, free will is shown by the doctrine of Chrysostom, that all would be equally good or bad without it. There would not be the diversity that there is. But grace makes the difference.

4. The fourth is that exhortations, promises, rebukes, threatenings, all presuppose free will. The answer is a threefold one:

(*a.*) Christ and His apostles taught the impotency of man, and yet used these means.

5. (*b.*) They have their value as illustrating the connection betwixt things, as producing a sense of misery, and as leading to the source of help.

(*c.*) They manifest the truth and extent of depravity.

6. We come now to objections drawn from Scripture. These, though singly numerous, may be reduced to a few heads.

The first class of arguments is drawn from the multitude of Scripture precepts, and the argument is that commands imply the power of obedience. Calvin, in answer, reduces all the precepts of the Bible to three points:

(*a.*) Those requiring first conversion.

(*b.*) Others relate to duties of the law.

(*c.*) Others to perseverance in grace received.

Before noticing each head particularly, Calvin discusses the principle, Does the command imply corresponding ability? That it does proceeds on the assumption that it would be otherwise given in vain. But Paul expressly indicates other uses. Hence, though it cannot be obeyed by natural strength, it was not given in vain.

7. But the promises connected with the law show conclusively that strength must come from grace. Still, we are not stocks nor stones. There is moral agency in all this.

8. Calvin now shows that the law does not imply corresponding power, by considering the three kinds of precepts already mentioned, and proving (*a*) that the Scripture directly teaches that we cannot do the things commanded, and (*b*) gives special promises of grace to God's children in reference to each.

9. He considers the objection that the work of obedience is represented as divided betwixt God and us—that we have some strength and He assists our weakness. This is first false, but if it were true it establishes the proposition that the command *transcends* our power. The question is not about the degree, but the fact. If we require *any* assistance at all, the law is too much for us, and the point is given up.

10. The second class of arguments drawn from conditional promises, which imply a power to fulfil. Calvin shows the use of these promises in evincing our unworthiness, stimulating our desires and illustrating the real connections of things.

11. The third class of arguments is derived from those passages which represent our ruin as our own fault. The answer here is, that sin is none the less voluntary because it is inevitable. Then, moral ends are answered by these reproaches in the children of God.

12. The passage from Moses (Deut. xxx. 11–14) considered. Calvin shows that the reference here is to the gospel and to the promises of grace, and that there is no implication that the law can be easily observed.

13. A class of passages in which God is represented as withdrawing from men to see what they will do, considered. The implication is not that men can convert themselves without God's grace. They are a moral discipline by which God awakens us to a sense of our danger and unworthiness.

14. Those passages considered in which our actions are represented as *our own.*

15. A still further answer to the same objection. The concluding sections are occupied with the consideration of particular texts supposed to prove ability: Gen. iv. 7, in which it is maintained that sin was subject to Cain; Rom. ix. 16, in which it is implied that a man does well; but particularly the parable concerning the traveller who fell among thieves.

CHAPTER VI.

REDEMPTION FOR LOST MAN TO BE SOUGHT IN CHRIST.

1. NATURAL religion is simply introductory to the doctrine of redemption by Christ. It shows the need of a Saviour. It would be of no use to know our present wretchedness if there were no hope of relief. Our only hope is in the cross. The world by wisdom knows not God. Since the fall no saving knowledge of God has ever been enjoyed apart from the cross of Christ. It is eternal life to know God and Christ. Those who are without Christ are without God. Natural religion leaves every man under the curse.

2. Christ was always the hope of the Church. The ancient fathers looked to Him, and to Him alone. He was the Seed promised to Abraham. The adoption of Abraham's posterity was in Him. Hannah refers to Him (1 Sam. ii. 10): "The Lord shall give strength unto His King and exalt the horn of His Anointed." David was a type of Him, and treats of His coronation in Psalm ii. The promise of Christ was the ground of stability to David's throne. All worship was in and by Him.

3. Christ was the hope of the Church in afflictions. He had to come, and the people must be preserved for that event. He was *the sign* of deliverance. Hence the promise to Ahaz: "A virgin shall conceive," etc. David's throne always held out as the source of relief.

4. Hence a general expectation of a Messiah prevailed among the Jews. It was spiritual among some, grievously misapplied among others, but in either case shows the general drift of prophetic teaching.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAW WAS GIVEN TO KEEP ALIVE THE HOPE OF SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST TILL HE SHOULD COME.

THIS treats of the design of giving the law, and shows that it was not subversive of the grace of the Gospel.

1. The ceremonies of the law evidently looked beyond themselves.

(1.) From their own nature. They would have been ridiculous and absurd as final and complete.

(2.) They were said expressly to be conformed to the pattern shown in the mount.

(3.) The Epistle to the Hebrews articulately proves it.

2. The kingdom of David may be regarded as belonging to the ministry of the law. So that its two principal features were Kingdom and Priesthood. Both look to Christ.

3. The use of the moral law, and particularly the conditional promises, is next discussed. The connection betwixt holiness and happiness, sin and death, clearly established. But the consequence is despair to ourselves.

4. These promises, however, not in vain, but the discussion of this subject postponed until he comes to the subject of justification.

5. Perfect obedience shown, however, to be impossible. The law, therefore, cannot be given that we may live by it.

6 and 7. Hence the question of the use of the law. This is, *first*, to convince of sin, of impotence, of just and righteous condemnation.

8. The design not to produce despair, but resort to God's grace.

9. Augustin illustrates its use in making us seek grace.

10. The *second* office of the law is to *restrain*. It represses wickedness. Calvin has here a thought that our discipline of restraint by the law before conversion is of use to us in self-denial after conversion.

11. "The law a schoolmaster" explained.

12. The *third* use of the law is to furnish a perfect rule of righteousness and to incite our indolence; it is a guide and a spur.

13. Hence Antinomianism rebuked.

14. The remaining sections discuss the abolition of the law. His explanation of "the handwriting of ordinances against us," borrowed from Augustin, is quite ingenious, though hardly consistent with the context.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST, TO BE MEDIATOR, MUST BE BOTH GOD AND MAN.

1. The necessity that our mediator should be truly God and man is not an absolute but hypothetical necessity, conditioned upon the purpose of redemption. There could be no salvation without it. Man separated from God by sin; none could bring them together but One who could lay his hand upon both.

(1.) Angels could not, for they needed a *head* as the ground of their own firm and indissoluble union with God.

(2.) If man had not fallen he would have needed a mediator that he might penetrate to God.

(3.) The elements of union are found in the two natures in the Mediator. He is near to us—our kinsman, our flesh, and hence signalized as a man. He is also God. Immanuel.

2. The work to be done evinces the stringency of this necessity. We were to be made sons of God. That this might be done the Son of God must become a son of man; He must participate with us in what was ours that we might share with Him in what was His. His incarnation, therefore, which makes Him our Brother, is the pledge of our sonship. Again, He was to swallow up death. Who could do that but Life? He was to conquer sin. Who could do that but Righteousness? To conquer death and hell, and hence the need of Almighty power.

3. Another principal branch of His work was to render satisfaction to the law in the place of man. He must be human in order to suffer—Divine, to give efficacy to His death.

4. Do the Scriptures resolve the *whole* necessity of the incarnation into the necessity of redemption? Or is there reason to believe that if man had not sinned the Son would have become incarnate? Calvin shows that the Scriptures uniformly resolve the necessity into that of a redemption by sacrifice and blood, and that it is rash to speculate beyond this. The only necessity which *they* teach is that which springs from the purpose of grace. This proved by a copious citation of texts.

5. Should it be said that the Scriptures do not teach that the Son would not have been incarnate had not man sinned, it is answered: We have no right to say so. It is enough that the incarnation and redemption are always *connected* in Scripture as *mutually dependent* parts of one scheme of grace. Paul traces the scheme to the eternal decree of God, but connects *incarnation* with redemption; and when he illustrates the love of Christ, he is always careful that his arguments centre on the cross.

6. The ground on which Osiander insists that the incarnation would have taken place whether man had sinned or not, is that the image of God in which man was originally created was the future humanity of Christ. That was the pattern of the human body. But this is an absurd perversion of what is meant by the image of God.

(1.) The Son was *then*, at the time of creation, the image of God.

(2.) Angels also bear that image.

7. Hence no need of incarnation that man might bear the image of God. Nor does Christ lose His dignity by being made as Redeemer after the fashion of man—not the *first* but the *second* Adam. Nor was His incarnation necessary to His headship over angels and all creatures. That He was as Son. Hence we are not authorized to say that there was any other necessity of the incarnation but that which springs from the purpose of salvation.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRUE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

1. The Deity of Christ having been already proved, it remains to show that He was really and truly a man, in opposition to the Marcionites, who make His humanity a phantom, and the Manichees, who give Him a celestial flesh.

(1.) The promise of a blessing was in the *seed* of Abraham and of a kingdom to the *seed* of David. He is a man, not because born of a virgin, having been created elsewhere and transmitted through her, but because He was the seed of David according to the flesh.

(2.) He was subject to human infirmities—hunger, cold, thirst, fatigue, etc.

(3.) He was like unto the brethren. (Heb. ii. 16.)

(4.) His receiving the Spirit, and being pure and sanctifying Himself, imply His humanity. This paragraph is a brief but conclusive demonstration of His true and proper humanity.

2. Calvin proceeds to notice the cavils of opponents: (1.) He was said to be in the figure or fashion of a man, therefore not a real man. The scope of the argument is to illustrate His humility, and the whole point would be destroyed if He was not really a man. Peter and Paul both teach that He suffered through weakness, through the flesh. (2.) He is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Paul is speaking of His efficacy, not His nature, but the whole argument from His resurrection to ours implies that He was a man, or it is inconclusive. (3.) Son of man is not a title given to Him because He was promised, but because He had our nature. (4.) First-born, if He were a man, would make Him the first descendant of Adam, but it is a title of dignity and precedence.

3. An allegorical seed of David and Abraham evidently inconsistent with Paul's reasoning.

(1.) Objected that He is only from Mary, and not from David.

(2.) That the woman has no seed. This argument refuted by the law of incest and the law of hereditary slavery.

4. The objection answered that if Christ were really descended from Adam, He would have been involved in original sin. Depravity is not the result of the law of generation simply in itself, but of the law as affected by the fall. The immaculate conception of Jesus is conclusive proof that it is federal headship, and not birth simply, that determines moral character.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TWO NATURES IN ONE PERSON.

UNION of the two natures is not by confusion or mixture of substances, but in the unity of the Person. The Son of God took into union with His Divine Person human nature. Each nature retains its own properties, but they constitute but one Christ.

BOOK THIRD.

OF THE MODE OF OUR PARTAKING OF THE GRACE OF CHRIST: WHAT BENEFITS IT CONFERS, AND WHAT FRUITS FLOW FROM IT.

CHAPTER I.

THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST MADE AVAILABLE TO US BY THE SECRET OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.

1. UNION with Christ is the indispensable condition of our participating in His benefits. As long as we are separate from Him, His salvation is nothing to us. He must become ours, or we get no good from Him. He is the head. This union is produced by the Holy Spirit. He applies salvation by working faith in us and uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling. Hence the Spirit testifies in earth and heaven.

2. The Spirit is the bond of our union with Christ, and therefore Christ is furnished with Him without measure. He is, therefore, called the Spirit of sanctification. Joel distinguishes the Christian as the dispensation of the Spirit; and though the gift signalized in his prophecy is that of prophecy, it indicates the general illumination by which disciples should be largely made. He is both the Spirit of the Father, and also of the Son as Mediator.

3. The epithets applied to the Spirit are considered, and the reasons of them explained: The Spirit of Adoption, First-Fruits and Earnest, Water, Fire, Oil and Unction, Fountain, Hand of God.

4. His principal work is the production of Faith. This is His gift. The renovation and resurrection of the soul are His prerogatives.

CHAPTER II.

OF FAITH: DEFINITION OF IT, AND ITS PECULIAR PROPERTIES.

1. THAT we may understand the nature of Faith we must appreciate our state of ruin and despair under the law, and the provisions of the Gospel for our salvation. It is clear that there must be something

peculiar in the Faith which apprehends such blessings. It is not blind opinion or persuasion. It is not mere assent to the Gospel history. Neither is God absolutely the object of it, as the Schoolmen fancy. It is God, but God in Christ. This truth must be distinctly apprehended.

2. The doctrine of implicit faith must be specially avoided. It is utterly subversive of true faith. In reality it is neither faith nor knowledge, but a negation of both. It is mere submission to the Church. But true faith is intelligent.

3. In our present condition of ignorance and weakness many things are obscure to us, many incomprehensible, and the attitude of our minds should be docility. *This* is nothing but ignorance combined with humility, and is not to be abusively confounded with faith. That is the knowledge of Christ, and not reverence for the Church.

4. Our ignorance and imperfection of knowledge in the present state preclude comprehension of many things. Much must always remain implicit. Our motto is progress, but faith is only predicable of what we actually apprehend and as we apprehend it. The disposition to follow principles is only docility; it puts us in a condition to believe, but is not faith itself, except in its generic principle.

5. That may be called an implicit faith, therefore, which is only a preparation for faith, the acknowledgment of a principle which shall guarantee articles. The case of the Samaritans. But there is always here a Divine principle divinely received; it is a beginning of truth and knowledge. This initial knowledge, combined with a desire for more, very different from the blind submission of Papists.

6. The function of true faith is to receive Christ as invested with His Gospel. This is the object of saving faith. This does not exclude the Old Testament, but the object is more clearly revealed now. Faith is always measured by the *Word*. This is its rule and standard.

7. That in the Word which faith seizes upon for life is the mercy of God in Christ. The Spirit enables us to perceive and embrace God's testimony on that point. Putting these elements together, we have Calvin's definition of Faith: "*Divinæ erga nos benevolentiæ firmam certamque cognitionem, quæ gratuitæ in Christo promissionis veritate fundata, per Spiritum Sanctum et revelatur mentibus nostris et cordibus obsignatur.*"

NOTE.—Calvin seems to have collected more into his definition than he had gathered in his analysis. His analysis gives—(1.) Christ as the object; (2.) Christ clothed with the Gospel; (3.) the Word as the measure; (4.) the promise of salvation as the special matter of the Word; (5.) belief of this promise implies reliance on Christ for salvation; and (6.) as this belief is produced by the Holy Spirit, the definition ought to be "a firm and steady knowledge of God's benevo-

lence to sinners in Christ, and a consequent reliance upon Jesus according to the Gospel for salvation." *Not to me,* but to *sinners.*

8. Before vindicating his definition and considering it in detail, Calvin disposes of some preliminary points, and first in relation to the distinction between a formed and an unformed faith. A formed faith is faith with the addition of pious affection; an unformed faith is without it. The faith in each case is the same; it is mere assent. This is its essence. It becomes saving by the addition of pious affection, itself remaining essentially the same. Calvin shows, on the contrary, that the very essence of faith is the pious affection; that saving faith therefore is essentially a *different thing* from mere assent. Faith is of the heart rather than the head, is the special gift of the Spirit as the Spirit of adoption, and embraces Christ for *sanctification* as well as for pardon.

9. The passage, 1 Cor. xiii. 2, that "faith without charity is nothing," which is supposed to prove an unformed faith, is explained. Faith, there, is the special persuasion of miraculous power, and in the preceding chapter is discriminated from saving faith. The error arises by not noting the ambiguity of the word. The same word is used for different things. But when is it applied to the pious, it has one meaning which necessarily includes charity. The thing there is always the same, and is never mere assent. Among the ambiguities may be noted historic faith and temporary, both specifically different from saving faith.

10. As temporary faith, though really unworthy of the name of faith, is an image or shadow of it, Calvin specially notes it. Simon Magus and the stony-ground hearers are instances of it. Such persons deceive themselves as well as others. They have emotions, but they are not the emotions of true piety. Calvin makes a remark here: Those who believe without trembling are inferior to devils; those who believe and only tremble are on a par with them.

11. If it is objected that temporary faith ought not to be called faith, since that is the fruit of election, it is answered that the resemblance between them is the ground of the common appellation. The resemblance is so close as to deceive themselves and others. They taste something of the goodness of God; they believe Him to be propitious to them; they have a sense of reconciliation, but they have not the spirit of adoption. This widely separates them from the elect.

12. Their sense of Divine things, next, is temporary, it has no root; their love is mercenary, it is not filial. But still the principle of their exercises is called faith.

13. Other ambiguities of the word faith are pointed out, as when it is put for the doctrine of the Gospel, belief of some special proposition. This catachresis is of the same kind as when the worship

of idolaters is called piety. But the question returns as to *saving faith.*

14. Calvin now proceeds to an articulate consideration of the definition previously given. Faith is first referred to the category of *knowledge.* But it is knowledge of a peculiar kind. It is not like the comprehension of an object submitted to our senses. It is not bare thought. It is a higher type of cognition beyond the reach of nature—a cognition in which we understand more by the certainty of the persuasion than by any power of representation. It is a sense, a loving sense, of the Divine goodness. The Scriptures uniformly describe it in terms of knowledge.

15. It is a certain and solid knowledge, not a fluctuating opinion or a vacillating conviction. It rests upon the promises of God. The Scriptures are emphatic in representing their own stability in order to root unbelief out of our hearts, and bring us to a steady and fixed persuasion of their truth. Faith grasps with a firm hold what God testifies of His goodness in Christ.

16. Faith, therefore, is accompanied with confidence arising from appropriation of the promises. If by confidence is meant reliance and expectation, it is right; if it is meant, as it seems to be, that faith consists in the assurance of my own personal salvation, this is to confound its reflex with its direct exercise. Calvin's language is very strong as to assurance entering into the essence of faith.

17. This section undertakes to reconcile the doctrine of assurance with the doubts, anxieties and conflicts of believers. The certainty does not preclude all doubt nor all solicitude. On the contrary, the Christian life is a perpetual conflict, but faith never fails to look to God and struggles until it gets the mastery. David is taken as an illustrious example.

NOTE.—This section is a fine description of the conflicts of faith, but it fails to prove that a believer always has a steady sense of his acceptance; it only proves that he has a steady reliance upon God—that his troubles carry him *to* God instead of *from* God, as with hypocrites.

18. The struggle of faith and unbelief is the contest of the flesh and Spirit. This is finely described. But does not such a contest show that faith is not assurance? By no means, for faith always triumphs.

NOTE.—It does prove that the believer is not always assured. Calvin is confounding the essence of faith in itself with faith as it is realized in the believer. Faith in its own nature may be assurance, but the believer mixes other things with it which obscure it, so that he is not assured.

19. The sum of all is, that faith at first is feeble and imperfect, but

always of the same nature; it sees a reconciled God; it grows in clearness, distinctness and strength with our growth in experience and knowledge, but the lowest degree contemplates God as merciful and reconciled—that is, relies upon His grace.

20. Both points—that is, the incipient weakness and subsequent growth of faith—the apostle illustrates in the noted passage (1 Cor. xiii. 9), "we know in part." Our rudeness of knowledge exposes us to temptations and perpetual conflicts. We groan and struggle.

21. In this conflict faith uses the word of God, and against all the insinuations that He has cast us off, that He is not merciful, opposes His promises and grace. In this way it finally triumphs, showing that it is an incorruptible seed.

NOTE.—Here also the thing proved is only that it continues to *rely*, to *trust*.

22. There is a salutary fear impressed by the Divine judgments and a sense of weakness and danger which, so far from being inconsistent, strengthens faith. It is the fear of one solicitous for righteousness, and arises from the love of God and distrust of ourselves. It is caution.

23. It is not inconsistent with confidence in God. This largely proved: caution combined with a sense of security.

24. Considers the semi-Papistic notion that faith must always be accompanied with doubt, a fear of real apprehension. When we look at Christ, we hope; at ourselves, we fear—that is, we must mix law and grace.

25. Bernard quoted on this point.

26. The pious fear of God analyzed and resolved into reverence and fear, or honor and fear—the fear being filial, a tender regard for God's glory and sensibility to sin.

27. The fear which has torment, of which John speaks, very different from this. That is a slavish fear—nothing ingenuous and loving about it.

28. The blessing which faith is certified of is *eternal life*. It looks to the future. Its rewards are not here, but hereafter, and eternal life includes grace and glory—all real good, but especially final glory.

29. The precise ground of faith is the *promise*. The whole Word is embraced and acted agreeably to, but the promise is that in which *life* is found, and saving faith apprehends God's mercy in Christ.

30. The objection of those who say that faith respects the whole word of God equally, considered. We admit that it respects the whole word of God, but we maintain it is neither firm nor finds life and peace until it finds Christ. It is saving not as faith, but as *uniting* to Him. Steadiness and life flow from the promise.

31. Faith, therefore, is measured by the Word. As well might a tree bear fruit without a root as faith exist without the Word. It,

of course, implies a conviction of the Divine power or a sense of the Divine ability to realize the Word. Hence the frequent descriptions of the Divine omnipotence in the Scriptures. Power props faith, but the *credenda*, things to be believed, must be gathered from the Word, particularly God's goodness. We must *know* to believe, and the knowledge is from the Word. To go beyond the Word is a weakness, an error, a sin. Sarah did it, Rebecca did it, Isaac did it: all these had faith, but they mixed their own devices with it, showing that we err when we trust at all to ourselves.

32. Faith embraces the *promises in Christ*. It can embrace them only in Him, for it is only in Him that God is reconciled to us. The goodness of God, however manifested in benefits and favours, is never really apprehended until it is apprehended in Him. The promises have no efficacy apart from Him. The cases of Naaman, the Eunuch, and Cornelius have been urged as showing true faith without a reference to Christ. But in these cases there was a rudimental, general knowledge, and in a proper sense an implicit faith.

33. The necessity of the Spirit to produce faith. He enlightens the mind and establishes the heart. It is not mere assent. The Spirit also perfects the faith by constant additions. How it is that we receive the Spirit by faith and yet the Spirit is the Author of faith.

34. A more distinct consideration of the grounds of our need of the Spirit—(1.) Incapacity to apprehend spiritual things; (2.) Aversion from them. The positive teaching of Scripture on these points.

35. Faith affirmed to be the *gift* and the *work of God*.

36. Faith, as including a work upon the *heart* as well as the intellect, a cognition of the *good* as well as the true. Hence the Spirit an earnest and a seal. This experience the foundation of certitude.

37. Faith—as we have seen, liable to fluctuations, but this is its security—God's faithfulness.

38. The doctrine that personal assurance should be excluded from faith exploded.

39. This assurance shown to involve no presumption.

40. And to involve final perseverance.

The last three sections show: Section 41, the concurrence of Calvin with Paul in Heb. xi. 1; Sections 42 and 43, the relations of Faith and Hope.

CHAPTER XI.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

1. We have already explained that faith in Christ is the only way of salvation to a sinner. Two benefits result from it. Justification and Holiness. The second has already been discussed. We come

now to the first, *Justification.* This is the *principal hinge of religion.*

2. The meaning of the expressions, *To be justified in the sight of God, to be justified by works, to be justified by faith.* To be justified is to be reputed and accepted as righteous. To be justified by works is to be reputed righteous because our works are what the law requires. To be justified by faith is to be reputed and accepted as righteous on account of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and appropriated by faith. It consists of two parts—the remission of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

3. That the word *justify* does not mean to *make* a man righteous, but to *declare* him so, is evident from many passages of Scripture. A few will suffice: Luke vii. 29–35, "The people that heard Christ justified God," and Christ says, "Wisdom is justified of her children." Here the words are evidently taken in a *declarative* sense. They denote an ascription to God and Wisdom of the praise to which they are entitled. (Luke xvi. 15.) Our Saviour reprehends the Pharisees for "justifying themselves;" that is, not for making themselves righteous, but for seeking the reputation of it without deserving it. The Hebrew idiom calls those *sinners* who are *reputed* such, whether they are so or not. Bathsheba says, "I and my son shall be counted offenders and sinners," meaning that they will be treated so, though they were not so. So much for the Scripture usage of the word.

That justification by faith is justification by the righteousness of Christ imputed and received by faith, is plain from the comparison of all the passages which treat of the subject:

(1.) "God justifieth the ungodly which believe in Jesus." Here they are ungodly, and yet, according to Scripture use, declared righteous.

(2.) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect," etc. Here justification is opposed to condemnation, and implies an acquittal from guilt.

(3.) As we are justified by the mediation of Christ, it is clearly His righteousness that is imputed. Acts xiii. 38, 39, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," etc. This passage shows that justification implies remission of sins—that it is an acquittal by mere favour without the works of the law. And so, too, the Publican was justified. Ambrose styles confession of sins a legitimate justification.

4. The thing itself is so represented in Scripture as to leave no doubt that justification refers to the state, and not the character. (Eph. i. 5, 6.) Our acceptance is the same as being justified freely by His grace in Romans iii. 24. In Romans iv. 6–8, justification, the imputation of righteousness and pardon are all clearly one and the

same thing. In 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, reconciliation to God is made the great end of the gospel, and it consists in not imputing trespasses.

So we are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and He is our righteousness.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

1. THE importance of this subject as a cure of scruples, an appendix to justification. The two extremes of opinion—one denying it altogether, the other abusing it into licentiousness. Hence the necessity of discussing it. The Gospel cannot be understood without it.

2. Christian liberty consists in three things:

The first is freedom from the law in the matter of justification. The abolition of the law in reference to that end. "Christ the end of the law," etc. If any place be allowed to the law, there can be no certainty to the conscience. This does not dispense with the law, as a rule of life.

3. The Epistle to the Galatians is an articulate exposition of the element of Christian liberty. Paul is not discussing chiefly the ceremonial law. The argument is this: (1.) Those who introduce the shadows when the substance is come, abridge our liberty.

(2.) Those who introduce the principle of works on which they pleaded for ceremonies, deny the Gospel.

(3.) *A fortiori*, ceremonial works nothing.

4. The second element of Christian liberty is freedom from a legal spirit and the possession of the spirit of adoption. The question is as to the ground or motive to obedience, the impulse from which it springs, and here the difference between the slave and the child is at once revealed. This freedom absolutely essential to peace of mind and alacrity of obedience. It is the sense of adoption. The effect of it illustrated in the first commandment. Legal obedience impossible.

5. How the spirit of adoption is affected by the same thing.

6. Proofs from Hebrews and Romans of this part of Christian liberty: "Sin shall not have dominion over you," etc. Hebrews attributes all obedience to faith.

7. The third element of Christian liberty is freedom of conscience in relation to matters of indifference. This feature necessary to rebuke superstition and will-worship. It seems trivial, but is more important than at first blush appears. Calvin illustrates the progress of scruple in linen, hemp, tow, wine, delicate and coarse, water pure or bitter.

8. Romans xiv. 14: "Nothing unclean of itself." It may be made so by our scruples. The conscience is happy which is free. Not understanding this principle makes men—(1.) despisers of God; (2.) des-

perate; (3.) ungrateful or incapable of rendering thanks for God's gifts to them.

9. Christian liberty spiritual; its seat the conscience, and the conscience in reference to God. No pretext, therefore, for luxury, vanity, ostentation and pride. The criterion by which indifferent things cease to be indifferent to us.

10. A caution to those who think that Christian liberty consists in always asserting it before men. In this way they cause offences to the weak. The liberty allows abstinence as much as use.

11. Hence necessary to understand the doctrine of offences; two kinds, the offence given and the offence taken.

(1.) Offence given. (Rom. xiv. 1, 13; Rom. xv. 1.) (2.) Offence taken. (Matt. xv. 14.)

12. But how are we to distinguish the weak from the Pharisees? Paul's conduct in the case of Titus and Timothy considered.

13. No liberty in matters commanded or expressly laid down in Scripture. There must be no compromise here, but still the spirit of kindness and love.

14. The conscience therefore absolutely free from all authority but that of God.

15. The distinction between spiritual and human or civil government, and the relation of the conscience to each. Analysis of conscience.

16. Summary of all.

APPENDIX D.

QUESTIONS ON CALVIN'S INSTITUTES.

BOOK FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

IN what sense does Calvin use the term *Wisdom?*

2. What is the propriety of this use?

3. What is the sense attached to it in the Scriptures, particularly in the Proverbs of Solomon?

4. What was the use of it with Plato and Aristotle?

5. In what does wisdom principally consist?

6. What is the scope of the first chapter?

7. Show how the knowledge of ourselves conduces to the knowledge of God. Generalize Calvin's three propositions upon this point.

8. Show how the knowledge of God conduces to the knowledge of ourselves. Generalize the proposition and give the illustration.

9. What effect has the presence of God clearly manifested, even upon good men, and why? Illustrate by instances.

10. Recapitulate the chapter.

CHAPTER II.

1. What is the scope of this chapter?

2. What kind of knowledge does Calvin mean? Discriminate it from two other kinds of knowledge of God.

3. What is the question in regard to God which this knowledge answers?

4. Can we answer the question, *Quid sit Deus?*

5. Recapitulate.

CHAPTER III.

1. What is the connection of this chapter with the preceding?
2. What does Calvin mean by saying that the knowledge of God is natural?
3. What is the doctrine of innate ideas combated by Locke?
4. What is the true doctrine in relation to *a priori* cognitions?
5. Are Calvin's expressions liable to any just censure?
6. What is the proof that the knowledge of God is natural?
7. What are the recognized *criteria* of primitive truths?
8. Show that a sense of religion is universal.
9. Answer the objection that religion is the invention of politicians.
10. Show that a sense of religion is ineffaceable. Recapitulate.

CHAPTER IV.

1. What is the scope of this chapter and its connection with the preceding?
2. To what two causes does Calvin ascribe man's natural ignorance of God?
3. Is this ignorance excusable or not, and why not?
4. Show the effects of vanity coupled with pride, explaining what vanity and pride are.
5. Show the effects of malice or deliberate wickedness.
6. How would you meet the objection that superstitious worship will be accepted, because it is well-meant and sincere?
7. What is the kind of worship rendered by the malicious?

CHAPTER V.

1. What is the design of this chapter?
2. Into how many parts may it be divided?
3. What is said of the fitness of nature to teach us the being and character of God? What is the testimony of the Psalmist?
4. Is this testimony confined to the universe as a whole, or is it true of every department of God's works? What is the impression produced by it as a *whole?*
5. What is the difference between the unlearned and the man of science with relation to this testimony?
6. Among the mirrors of God in nature which is the most eminent? and why?
7. How does Calvin illustrate our ingratitude in not recognizing God in our own structure and constitution?
8. How does Calvin illustrate the wonderful constitution of the soul?
9. What does he say of a soul of the world?

10. What is said of the sustentation and guidance of this mighty fabric? And how are God's eternity and goodness educed?

11. What does Calvin mean by extraordinary works?

12. What is the real teaching of Providence in its ordinary and extraordinary operations?

13. What may we infer from the astonishing contrasts often presented in the lives of men?

14. How would you show that the manifestations of God in His works are singularly suited to promote piety?

15. What light does it throw upon the doctrine of a future life?

16. What is the actual effect of this teaching upon men? How do they pervert it?

17. How, particularly, is the vanity of the human mind illustrated?

18. How do the Scriptures represent all will-worship? Mention the four Scripture proofs appealed to.

19. Is nature, then, alone competent to lead a sinner to God?

20. Is human ignorance excusable?

21. What two inferences may be drawn from this chapter?

CHAPTER VI.

1. What is the design of this chapter?

2. What has been God's method from the beginning in instructing His Church?

3. Is revelation necessary in order to the knowledge of natural religion?

4. How does Calvin illustrate this?

5. To what two heads may revelation be reduced?

6. If reason in our fallen state cannot *discover* the doctrines of natural religion, of what use is it in relation to them?

7. How did God at first communicate His will?

8. What was the next step?

9. What is the advantage of reducing it to writing?

10. Where is the entire revelation now found?

11. What is the chief scope of this revelation?

12. How do the doctrines of natural religion stand related to this end?

13. What, therefore, is the only true method of knowing God?

14. How do the Scriptures contrast the lights of nature and revelation?

CHAPTER VII.

1. What is the scope of this chapter?

2. What is the real state of the question?

3. What is the *thesis* which Calvin maintains? and what is the opposite one which he condemns?

4. What is the first objection to the Romanist doctrine?
5. What is the Church's commendation of Scripture?
6. How is Scripture authenticated?
7. How is the sentiment so often quoted from Augustin explained?
8. What is the real ground of the authority of Scripture?
9. How can we infallibly know it to be the word of God?
10. Of what use are the probable proofs?
11. What is the nature of that faith which the self-evidence of Scripture produces?
12. How is the relation of the Church and Scripture expressed by Melancthon?

CHAPTER IX.

1. What is the connection of this chapter with the preceding?
2. What does Calvin say of those who neglect the Word under the pretext of being led by the Spirit?
3. How does he show that the Holy Spirit always produces reverence for the Word? Mention all the Scripture arguments.
4. How would you answer the objection that the Spirit is degraded by subjecting Him to the trial of Scripture?
5. How would you answer the cavil against the Word, that it is merely the letter which killeth? Explain the passage.
6. What is the precise function of the Spirit in relation to the Word? and how is the Word a test of the Spirit?
7. What is the Word without the Spirit, and what the Spirit without the Word?

CHAPTER X.

1. What is the scope of this chapter?
2. What is Calvin's method of showing that revelation and nature both teach the same God?
3. Recite the passages of Scripture on which he relies, and develop the argument.
4. How do nature and revelation coincide in the end of their teaching?
5. What is the sum of the general teaching of Scripture in relation to God as Creator?

CHAPTER XI.

1. What is the connection of this chapter with the preceding?
2. What is the general design of it?
3. Into how many parts may it be distributed?
4. What is its general *thesis?*

5. Why are idols particularly specified?

6. What is the significance of the various specifications in the second commandment?

7. What is the first proof that God rejects absolutely all images and all representations to the imagination?

8. Recite and explain the passage from Isaiah and from Paul.

9. What is the testimony of heathen philosophers to the same point?

10. From this testimony what may we infer as to the prohibition of idolatry among the Jews?

11. How does Calvin show that the symbols of the Divine presence employed under the law afford no countenance to images of God?

12. How does the Psalmist expose the folly of idolatry? Analyze his argument.

13. What is the raillery of Horace? Quote Isaiah in the same vein.

14. What is said of the distinction between pictures and images?

15. What is the ground on which Gregory defends images?

16. What is the teaching of the Spirit of God?

17. What is the testimony of Lactantius, Eusebius, the Council of Eliberis, and Augustin, and even of the heathen Varro?

18. What is said of the decency and modesty of Papal images?

19. What is the Divine method of teaching?

20. What is the real origin of idolatry? Give a short history of it from the Scriptures.

21. Explain the process by which images came to be adored.

22. What is the plea for image-worship among the Papists and among enlightened heathen?

23. Show the futility of this plea.

24. What is the distinction between *Latria* and *Dulia?* Show it to be vain.

25. What is the true use of sculpture and painting?

26. Is either ever lawful in the worship of God? and why not?

27. What Council of Nice declared that images were to be worshipped?

28. Mention some of the arguments used in that Council.

29. Mention some of the impieties which were uttered.

30. Is any refutation needed of such arguments?

CHAPTER XII.

1. What is the design of the exclusive definition of God which the Scriptures contain?

2. What is religion? Give the origin and significance of the term.

3. What is superstition? Its origin and import?

4. Why cannot religious worship be rendered to any being but God?

5. Show the futility of the distinction between *Latria* and *Dulia?*
6. What is idolatry in its largest sense?

CHAPTER XIII.

1. What is the question which this chapter proposes to answer?
2. What two properties of the Divine essence are first signalized?
3. How should these properties regulate our speculations concerning Him?
4. Show their bearing upon the error of the Manichees and Anthropomorphites.
5. What other peculiarity of the Divine essence is signalized in Scripture?
6. In showing that we do not make a threefold God, what method does Calvin pursue?
7. How does he show that the term *Person* is scriptural as expressive of the three subsistences in the Trinity? What is the Greek word, and how may it best be rendered?
8. What term is employed by the Greek Church?
9. What are the objections to the use of the term *Person*, and how does Calvin answer them? What criterion does he lay down as to the propriety of introducing new terms?
10. Show how Arianism and Sabellianism rendered the terms *consubstantial* and *Person* absolutely necessary to the Church.
11. What is the danger now of rejecting these words?
12. Were the Fathers consistent with each other in the use of these terms? How did they vindicate their use?
13. What is the thing we are particularly to aim at?
14. How does Calvin define the word *Person?*
15. How does Calvin vindicate the distinction betwixt subsistence and essence?
16. Having defined the terms, what is Calvin's method of proving the doctrine of the Trinity?
17. How does it appear that the word of God is not a transient sound, but an eternal subsistence? Mention the three proofs.
18. Answer the objection that the Word only began to be at the creation. How is this opinion defended? Explain Moses.
19. State the passages from the Old Testament which affirm the Divinity of Christ.
20. Signalize those particularly which speak of the Angel of Jehovah.
21. What is the first class of passages cited from the New Testament?
22. What other passages may be cited?
23. What is the argument from the works of Christ?

24. What is the argument from miracles?
25. What is the argument from religious worship?
26. How is the Holy Spirit proved to be God?
27. Give the steps of this argument.
28. Do the Scriptures expressly call Him God?
29. What class of passages signalize the whole Trinity?
30. Show that there is a distinction betwixt the Persons.
31. Are they separable because distinct?
32. What is the nature of this distinction?
33. Show that the distinction infers Unity.
34. What is Calvin's summation of the doctrine in Section 20?
35. What is the scope of the remainder of this chapter?
36. What caution does Calvin give as to the extent of our knowledge of the essence of God?

CHAPTER XIV.

1. What is the importance of the doctrine of the Creation?
2. What would you say of the cavil that the creation did not take place sooner?
3. Why was the creation successive, and not simultaneous?
4. What special proof have we in this order of goodness to man?
5. What are the first creatures Calvin considers?
6. What is the importance of the doctrine concerning angels?
7. How does Manichæism detract from the glory of God?
8. How could God have created evil spirits?
9. When and in what order were angels created?
10. What rule should regulate our inquiries on all subjects transcending the sphere of experience?
11. What question does Calvin dismiss as frivolous?
12. What important observation does he make as to the duty of a theologian?
13. What does he say of the work of Dionysius of Areopagus?
14. What are angels, and why so called?
15. Why called *Hosts? Powers? Principalities? Dominions? Thrones? Gods?*
16. What is the general office of angels with respect to us?
17. What special functions do they execute?
18. Give Scripture proofs.
19. What would you say of guardian angels? The arguments *pro* and *con?*
20. What doctrine is clear and consolatory?
21. What is said of the number and rank of angels? Are they material? Why are the cherubim said to be winged?

22. Show that they are real, substantive beings, and not mere influences.
23. What error does the doctrine concerning angels as ministers rebuke?
24. Why is their ministry made known to us?
25. What is the general use of this doctrine of angels?
26. What is the end of what Scripture teaches us about devils?
27. What is said of the number of evil spirits?
28. Why is one singled out from the rest?
29. What is the employment of devils in relation to God and the saints?
30. Do we know the history of the fall of devils?
31. Is the Devil absolutely in the power of God?
32. Scripture proofs.
33. In what sense do devils resist and in what obey God?
34. What power have devils over believers? Over unbelievers?
35. Prove the personality of devils.
36. Why should we delight in contemplating creation?
37. How does this contemplation bear on piety?
38. What particularly should stimulate our faith in God?

CHAPTER XVI.

1. Was God's interest in His works absolved at the creation?
2. Is creation intelligible without Providence?
3. What low and carnal doctrine touching the relation of God to the creature does Calvin condemn?
4. What is the Scripture view of Providence?
5. How is God's providential care of the creature signalized in the Psalms?
6. To what schemes is the doctrine of Providence opposed?
7. What kind of events is ascribed to chance? Give examples.
8. How do the Scriptures explain this same class of events?
9. What is the relation of inanimate objects to the agency of God?
10. Illustrate in the case of the sun and the seasons, and show that something beside necessary law is involved.
11. How do the Scriptures teach us to recognize God's omnipotence?
12. What two benefits result from this view?
13. How does Calvin briefly define Providence?
14. Show that simple prescience does not complete the idea.
15. What is the confused or general providence of the philosophers which he condemns?
16. What is the Epicurean doctrine?
17. How does general Providence detract from our views of God as a benefactor and a judge?

18. What creature in this world is the especial object of Divine care?

19. How far does Providence extend in relation to man? Give the Scripture proofs.

20. What are the illustrations of God's special providence mentioned in the seventh section?

21. How would you show that the doctrine of Providence is not obnoxious to the charge of being a new form of the Stoic Fate?

22. Is there any such thing as chance, strictly considered? Quote the passages from Basil and Augustin.

23. In what sense may we make a distinction between contingent and necessary events?

24. What twofold necessity did the Schoolmen make?

CHAPTER XVII.

1. What is the general purpose of the doctrine of Providence?

2. What four things must be taken into consideration in judging of Providence?

3. What is the spirit which we should bring to the study of Providence?

4. On what grounds do some object to the doctrine altogether?

5. To what department of truth would they confine us?

6. Show that the Scripture teaches the doctrine, and requires us to acquiesce in it with adoring reverence.

7. Is the will of God in providence, which is immutable and supreme, at all arbitrary?

8. What perverse inferences have men drawn from the doctrine of Providence?

9. How would you reconcile Providence with human deliberation and care?

10. Show that Providence affords no excuse for wickedness.

11. What are the points in the holy meditation on Providence which Calvin begins in the sixth section?

12. Show God's complete control over wicked men and devils in making them subserve His ends.

13. How does the doctrine of Providence reconcile us to injuries and afflictions?

14. Is Providence any argument against gratitude? Against the use of means? For commission of crime or negligence in duty? How does the Christian contemplate Providence in all these respects?

15. How does Calvin illustrate the happiness of a pious mind? See §§ 10, 11.

16. What do the Scriptures mean when they ascribe repentance to God?

17. Are the Divine decrees ever annulled?

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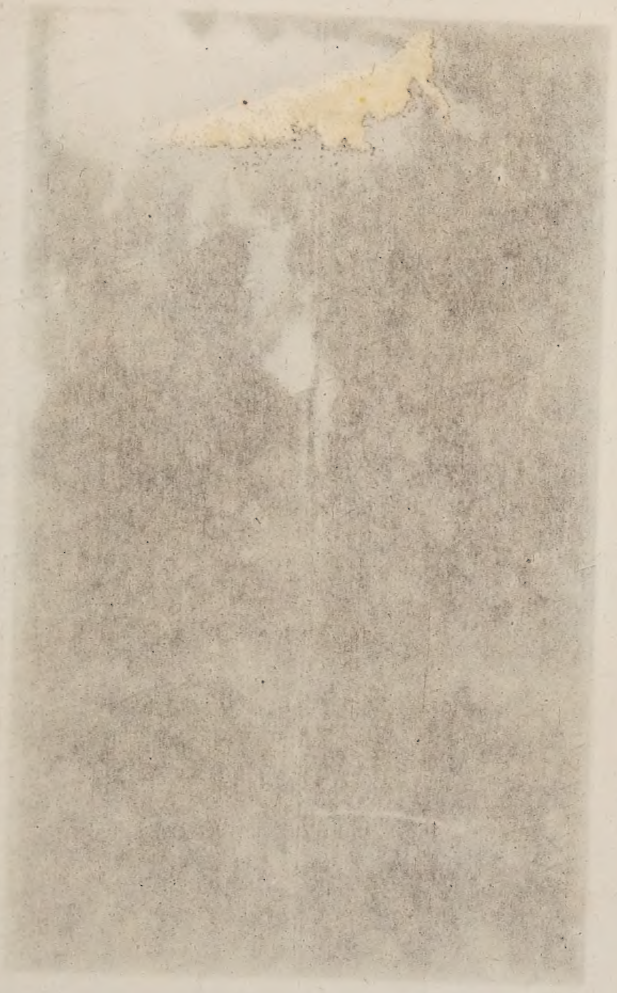

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